IV

(Informacje)

INFORMACJE INSTYTUCJI, ORGANÓW I JEDNOSTEK ORGANIZACYJNYCH UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

PYTANIA PISEMNE Z ODPOWIEDZIĄ

Pytania pisemne skierowane przez posłów do Parlamentu Europejskiego i odpowiedzi na te pytania udzielone przez instytucję Unii Europejskiej

(2014/C 399/01)

Treść Strona

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004490/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Données à caractère personnel et directive européenne

Saluée par les défenseurs des libertés, l'annulation de la directive européenne qui impose la conservation des données téléphoniques et des courriels pendant au moins six mois, provoque une certaine anarchie dans l'Union européenne et consterne les responsables de la lutte contre la cybercriminalité et le terrorisme.

Qu'en pense la Commission et que compte-t-elle faire?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2014)

L'arrêt rendu par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne le 8 avril 2014 concerne l'invalidation de la directive sur la conservation des données. La législation nationale des États membres n'est pas directement concernée par cette décision. L'article 15, paragraphe 1, de la directive sur la vie privée ([1]) autorise les États membres à adopter des mesures législatives prévoyant la conservation de données pendant une durée limitée lorsque cela est justifié, entre autres, à des fins de prévention et de détection des infractions pénales, d'enquêtes et de poursuites en la matière, à condition que cette rétention constitue une mesure nécessaire, appropriée et proportionnée, au sein d'une société démocratique. Ces mesures doivent être conformes aux principes généraux du droit de l'Union, notamment les droits fondamentaux. La législation des États membres sur la conservation des données est compatible avec le droit de l'Union dans la mesure où elle respecte ces critères. Chaque État membre doit évaluer attentivement s'il y a lieu de modifier sa législation.

Les aspects abordés par la Cour sont très complexes et leurs conséquences doivent être évaluées en profondeur. La Commission procédera à cette évaluation en concertation avec l'ensemble des parties intéressées, et de manière à tenir compte de tous les intérêts légitimes concernés. Elle entend pour ce faire prendre le temps nécessaire. Sur cette base, la Commission sera en mesure de déterminer, dans les mois à venir, si une nouvelle proposition législative s'impose.

([1]) Directive 2002/58/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 12 juillet 2002 concernant le traitement des données à caractère personnel et la protection de la vie privée dans le secteur des communications électroniques (directive «vie privée et communications électroniques»); JO L 201 du 31/7/2002, p. 37 [le lien renvoie au texte modifié en 2009].

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004490/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: European directive concerning personal data retention

The annulment of the European directive requiring the retention of telephone and e-mail data for at least six months has been welcomed by civil liberties campaigners. However, it has resulted in a somewhat anarchic situation in the EU and is a cause for concern among the authorities tasked with combating cybercrime and terrorism.

What does the Commission intend to do about this?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The ruling of the European Court of Justice of 8 April 2014 concerns the invalidation of the Data Retention Directive. Member States' national legislation is not directly concerned by the ruling. Article 15(1) of the e-Privacy Directive ([1]) allows Member States to adopt legislative measures providing for the retention of data for a limited period justified, *inter alia*, on the grounds of prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution of criminal offences, provided that such retention constitutes a necessary, appropriate and proportionate measure within a democratic society. Such measures must be in accordance with the general principles of Union law, including fundamental rights. Member States' national legislation on data retention remains compatible with EC law to the extent that it complies with these criteria. Each Member State has to carefully assess whether there is a need to change its national legislation.

The issues raised by the Court are very complex and require a thorough assessment of their impacts. The Commission will carry out such an assessment in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner to take on board all legitimate interests involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation. On that basis, the Commission will be able to evaluate in the coming months whether there is a need for a new legislative proposal.

([1]) Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12.7.2002 concerning the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector (Directive on privacy and electronic communications); OJ L 201, 31.7.2002, p. 37-47 [link is to text as amended in 2009].

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004491/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Tecnopolo di Bologna

L'edificazione del Tecnopolo di Bologna, una megastruttura da 100 000 mq che dovrebbe sorgere adattando l'ex sede storica della Manifattura Tabacchi, disegnata e costruita negli anni Cinquanta dal Prof. Ing. Luigi Nervi e quindi vincolata dalla Sovrintendenza, è da tempo oggetto di discussione.

Il tempo passa, i progetti e gli annunci abbondano, ma, nel frattempo, i costi lievitano: ora si ipotizza per l'intera opera un esborso totale, comprensivo di Iva e progettazione, di circa 300 milioni di EUR. Nel frattempo, la Procura della Repubblica presso il Tribunale di Bologna sta ipotizzando il reato di abuso di ufficio.

Gli anni trascorsi dall'idea di costruire il grande Tecnopolo all'odierna fase di progettazione avanzata hanno reso l'opera non conveniente dal punto vista economico e poi, ad uno ad uno, si sono sfilati tutti i centri di ricerca che dovevano occupare gli spazi. Il rischio è che il maestoso Tecnopolo di Bologna diventi la sede della Protezione Civile e di alcuni uffici della stessa Regione Emilia-Romagna, rivelandosi un fiasco. Si è confuso il contenuto con il contenitore preferendo costruire un impianto gigantesco piuttosto che realizzare politiche attrattive per le industrie tecnologiche.

Si chiede alla Commissione:

1. È al corrente di quanti fondi europei sono stati spesi nella mastodontica ristrutturazione/edificazione?

2. Può chiarire se l'utilizzo dei fondi è stato sino ad oggi lineare e corretto?

3. Trattandosi di un'area storica a vocazione industriale, sono state eseguite le verifiche del sottosuolo?

4. Non è forse possibile ipotizzare che il denaro messo da parte per ristrutturare gli edifici dell'ex Manifattura Tabacchi di Bologna vengano invece utilizzati per fare ricerca finalizzata allo sviluppo delle imprese e alla creazione di un tessuto industriale maggiormente competitivo e di nuovi posti di lavoro?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

Il progetto «Tecnopolo di Bologna» è finanziato a valere sull'asse «Ricerca industriale e trasferimento tecnologico» del programma operativo 2007-2013 per l'Emilia-Romagna cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.

Stando alle informazioni fornite alla Commissione dall'autorità di gestione del programma non si sono riscontrate irregolarità nell'implementazione del progetto. Se dovessero emergere elementi probanti nel merito, la Commissione adotterà tutti i passi necessari per tutelare gli interessi finanziari dell'UE.

In merito ai quesiti 3 e 4, la Commissione suggerisce che l'Onorevole deputata si metta direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione del programma. In linea con il principio della gestione concorrente applicato per l'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la selezione e l'implementazione dei progetti rientrano nelle responsabilità delle autorità nazionali:

Autorità di gestione del programma operativo regionale dell'Emilia-Romagna
Viale Aldo Moro 44 Bologna
adgpor@regione.emilia-romagna.it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004491/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Bologna 'Technopole'

Construction of a 'Technopole' in Bologna has been under discussion for some time. This mega-structure, with an area of 100 000m2, would adapt the historic former tobacco factory. This was designed and built in the 1950s by Professor Luigi Nervi and later placed under a preservation order by the Superintendent of Architectural and Cultural Heritage.

Time goes by and there have been many plans and announcements. Costs are also sky-rocketing: total project expenditure is now estimated at around EUR 300 million, including VAT and planning. Meanwhile, the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Court of Bologna is considering whether there has been abuse of public office.

Because of the years taken between the idea of building the grand Technopole and the present advanced stage of planning, the project is no longer economic. One by one, all the research centres which were to have occupied spaces have withdrawn. The risk is that the majestic Technopole of Bologna will become a Civil Defence headquarters with a few offices of the Region of Emilia-Romagna, and prove to be a fiasco. The book has been judged by its cover: preference was given to building a gigantic facility rather than to implementing policies which would attract technology-based industries.

1. Is the Commission aware of European spending on this gigantic restoration/building project?

2. Can it clarify whether the funds have been used directly and properly to date?

3. As this is an industrial heritage site, were soil surveys carried out?

4. Is it not perhaps conceivable that the money set aside to restore the buildings of Bologna's former tobacco factory could be used instead for research into business development, creation of a more competitive industrial fabric and new jobs?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The project 'Bologna Technopole' is financed under the 'Industrial research and technology transfer' priority of the 2007-2013 Emilia-Romagna programme, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

According to the information provided to the Commission by the managing authority of the programme, no irregularities relating to the implementation of this project have been found. Should any evidence in this respect emerge, the Commission will take all necessary steps to protect the EU's financial interests.

With respect to questions 3 and 4, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the programme. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation are the responsibility of national authorities:

Managing Authority Regional Operational Programme Emilia-Romagna
Viale Aldo Moro 44 Bologna
adgpor@regione.emilia-romagna.it

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004492/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: I conigli casalinghi

Secondo la Federazione Diritti animali, dopo cani e gatti, i conigli sono diventati il terzo animale da compagnia più diffuso. Rispetto agli altri due animali però non godono ancora di quei diritti che ne vietano l'uso alimentare delle carni e la commercializzazione di pelle e pelo, come stabiliscono le normative. La Federazione ha di recente presentato una petizione per chiedere che anche i conigli rientrino nella categoria degli animali «da affezione» e che sia stabilita una legge che li equipari a cani e gatti garantendo loro gli stessi diritti.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Negli altri Stati membri, esistono leggi che equiparano i conigli agli altri animali «da affezione»?

2. Non crede che sia necessaria un'armonizzazione delle normative per tutelare i conigli casalinghi?

3. Può dire se negli altri Stati membri esistono strutture veterinarie che curano le patologie dei conigli come già avviene per cani e gatti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2014)

L'allevamento di conigli per la produzione di carne o pelliccia è consentito nell'UE. Tale produzione è soggetta alla direttiva 98/58/CE del Consiglio riguardante la protezione degli animali negli allevamenti ([1]). Pertanto i proprietari o i custodi adottano le misure adeguate per garantire il benessere dei propri animali e per far sì che a detti animali non vengano provocati dolori, sofferenze o lesioni inutili. Alla Commissione non risulta che alcuno Stato membro abbia proibito l'allevamento dei conigli o ne abbia l'intenzione. Alcuni Stati membri tuttavia hanno introdotto disposizioni nazionali dettagliate per la protezione dei conigli di allevamento.

Per quanto riguarda gli animali da compagnia e la possibilità di introdurre disposizioni sul benessere di tali animali, la Commissione rimanda alla sua risposta alla denuncia CHAP(2013)3076 pubblicata nella Gazzetta ufficiale ([2]), e in particolare al paragrafo 3. Sebbene tale testo sia relativo ai cani randagi la risposta data nel suddetto paragrafo è valida per tutti gli animali da compagnia, indipendentemente dalla specie.

La Commissione non è in possesso di dati precisi su eventuali strutture veterinarie specifiche per conigli negli Stati membri, poiché il tema non è disciplinato a livello di UE. Tuttavia, risulta alla Commissione che i conigli tenuti come animali da compagnia sono spesso curati nelle cliniche veterinarie che sono destinate soprattutto ad altri animali da compagnia quali cani e gatti.

([1]) GU L 221 dell'8.8.1998, pag. 23.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:343:0021:0021:IT:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004492/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Domestic rabbits

According to the Italian animal rights federation, Federazione Diritti Animali, rabbits have become the third most popular pet after dogs and cats. Unlike for the other two animals, there are not yet any regulations prohibiting the consumption of rabbit meat and the marketing of rabbit skin and fur. The Federation recently filed a petition for rabbits to be classified as 'pets' and for legislation granting them equal treatment and rights to cats and dogs.

1. Can the Commission say whether other Member States have laws equating rabbits to other animals kept as pets?

2. Does it believe there is a need to harmonise the regulations to protect domestic rabbits?

3. Can it say whether the other Member States have veterinary facilities to treat diseases of rabbits, as is already done for dogs and cats?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

Keeping rabbits for the purpose of meat or fur production is permitted within the EU. Such production falls within the scope of Council Regulation 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes ([1]). As such the owners and keepers shall take all reasonable steps to ensure the welfare of the animals under their care and to ensure that those animals are not caused any unnecessary pain, suffering or injury. The Commission is not aware that any Member State has banned the farming of rabbits or proposed to do so. A few Member States have however introduced detailed national rules for the protection of farmed rabbits.

With regard to pet animals and the possibility to introduce animal welfare requirements, the Commission would refer to its answer to complaint CHAP(2013) 3076 which was published in the Official Journal ([2]), and particularly to its paragraph 3. Though this publication concerns stray dogs the answer given in said paragraph is equally relevant for all pets, irrespective of animal species.

The Commission does not have precise data on if and how many veterinary structures specific for rabbits are in place in the Member States, as the matter is not regulated at EU level. However, it is aware that rabbits kept as pet animals are often taken care of in veterinary clinics that are mainly devoted to other pets, such as dogs and cats.

([1]) OJ L 221, 8.8.1998, p. 23.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:343:0021:0021:EN:PDF

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004493/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(10 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Beni storici da salvaguardare: il Castello Orsini

Considerando che:

— nel territorio di Scurcola Marsicana s'innalza, sulla sommità del Monte S. Nicola, la Rocca Orsini, un'imponente struttura muraria di rilevanza storica per l'architettura fortificata italiana e per l'attribuzione della sua trasformazione da castello medievale a rocca rinascimentale;

— tale struttura, nel corso degli anni, ha presentato evidenti segni di usura e cedimento;

— Scurcola Marsicana ha subito negli anni scorsi anche una catastrofe naturale (con il terremoto del 2009) e il fatto di mettere a disposizione fondi comunitari per il restauro del patrimonio artistico sarebbe un importante messaggio di vicinanza da parte delle istituzioni;

— la città di Scurcola rappresenta un importante centro storico/culturale della Marsica, la cui principale attrattiva si basa sul Castello; tale sito potrebbe creare un importante indotto per tutta l'area con evidenti ricadute occupazionali e di sviluppo artistico ed economico;

— perdere la possibilità di ristrutturare tale opera sarebbe un danno enorme per il patrimonio architettonico locale, economico e d'immagine,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Sono previsti fondi europei per il ripristino di tale patrimonio storico/architettonico?

2. Come intende programmare i fondi destinati alla ristrutturazione per renderli il più efficienti possibile, agevolandone l'uso da parte delle amministrazioni comunali?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

1. Il programma 2007-2013 per l'Abruzzo, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR), prevede la possibilità di sostenere progetti del tipo menzionato dall'Onorevole deputato esclusivamente a valere sulla priorità VI che è esplicitamente consacrata a «Recupero e rivitalizzazione economica e sociale del territorio colpito dal sisma».

Nel contesto della gestione concorrente, gli Stati membri hanno la responsabilità di selezionare e implementare i progetti. Stando alle informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione, il FESR non ha erogato nessun finanziamento per il restauro del patrimonio storico-architettonico del Castello Orsini.

2. Per quanto concerne il periodo 2014-2020, un finanziamento del FESR per il ripristino del patrimonio culturale sarà possibile, ma soltanto nel quadro di un approccio integrato di lungo periodo avente un chiaro impatto socioeconomico. Tali criteri dovrebbero massimizzare l'efficienza dei finanziamenti in linea con la strategia ispirata ai risultati adottata per il nuovo periodo di programmazione. Nel periodo 2014-2020 sono contemplate diverse disposizioni volte ad agevolare l'accesso dei beneficiari ai finanziamenti. Nel loro accordo di partenariato gli Stati membri dovranno includere un sommario delle azioni da essi pianificate per ridurre gli oneri amministrativi a carico dei beneficiari.

Per quanto concerne le eventuali altre fonti di finanziamento diretto per la salvaguardia del patrimonio culturale, conformemente all'articolo 167 del TFUE ([1]), l'azione dell'UE si limita a incoraggiare la cooperazione tra gli Stati membri e ad appoggiarne e integrarne l'azione, tra l'altro al fine di salvaguardare il patrimonio culturale di importanza europea. La tutela del patrimonio culturale rientra però precipuamente nelle competenze nazionali.

([1]) Trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004493/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Preservation of ancient monuments: Castello Orsini

Castello Orsini stands at the top of Monte S. Nicola in the district of Scurcola Marsicana. This imposing walled fortress is important in the history of Italian military architecture and for its conversion from medieval castle to renaissance stately home.

Over the years, the castle has shown signs of decay and collapse.

Scurcola Marsicana was hit by an earthquake in 2009. Community funding to restore its artistic heritage would send an important message of support from the European institutions.

Scurcola is an important centre of history and culture in the Marsica district. Its main attraction is the castle, a site which could generate important secondary business for the whole area, with obvious benefits for employment and artistic and economic development.

To miss the opportunity to restore the castle would cause immense loss to the local architectural heritage, to the economy and to the image of the district.

Questions to the Commission:

1. Have European funds been allocated to the restoration of this historical and architectural heritage?

2. How does the Commission intend to plan to maximise the efficiency of the funding of the restoration and facilitate access to it by the local authorities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. The 2007-2013 programme of Abruzzo co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) provides for the possibility to support projects of the types mentioned by the Honourable Member only under priority VI which is explicitly devoted to the recovery and economic and social regeneration of the area affected by the earthquake.

In the context of shared management, the Member States are responsible for selecting and implementing the projects. According to the information provided by the managing authority, no funding has been provided by the ERDF for the restoration of the historical and architectural heritage of Castello Orsini.

2. Concerning the 2014-2020 period, ERDF funding for the restoration of cultural heritage will be possible, but only in the framework of an integrated, long-term looking approach with a clear socioeconomic impact. These criteria are expected to maximise the efficiency of funding in line with the result-oriented emphasis of the new period. Various provisions are envisaged in the 2014-2020 period to facilitate access to funding by beneficiaries. A summary of the actions planned by Member States to reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries will have to be included by Member States in their partnership agreement.

Concerning any other sources of direct funding for the safeguarding of cultural heritage, in accordance with Article 167 of TFEU ([1]), action by the EU is otherwise limited to encouraging cooperation between Member States and supporting and supplementing their actions, *inter alia*, with a view to conserving and safeguarding cultural heritage of European significance. The protection of cultural heritage is primarily a national responsibility.

([1]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004494/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Pakistan's blasphemy law allegedly often misused against Christian and Hindu minorities

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the unprecedented reported escalation of misuses of blasphemy laws in Pakistan against non-Muslim minorities and disproportionately against the Christian and Hindu communities?

For instance, is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the recent case of Ms Sawan Mashi who was sentenced, by an additional session, to death on 27 March 2014, and is the Vice-President/High Representative aware that a Hindu temple and other properties were set on fire by an angry mob after it was alleged that a Hindu man had burnt the Quran?

If these cases are already known to the Vice-President/High Representative, what demands has she made to the Pakistani Government to stop this violence and disproportionate prosecution of minorities, and what measures can be taken by the EU with Pakistan to improve its overall human rights record?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The HR/VP thanks the honourable member for drawing attention to these cases. The individual who was sentenced on 27 March 2014 was Mr Sawan Masih.

For information on the HRVP's response and the measures that are being taken by the EU, please refer to written questions E-4233/14 and E-3283/14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004495/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Hunting birds with protected conservation status

The EU Birds Directive allows hunting of some species of wild birds under certain conditions, including that hunting does not threaten the conservation status of a particular species and that it does not take place during breeding seasons or when birds are migrating to their rearing grounds.

Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the illegal killing of songbirds and other migratory birds is still occurring in large numbers in several Mediterranean countries, such as Cyprus and Malta. Hunters often use non-selective methods which are banned under the Birds Directive, such as limes and nets, and the species caught include many that are listed as threatened in the directive.

Can the Commission say what action is being taken to enforce the provisions of the Birds Directive and stop this illegal hunting?

In addition, given that several species of wild bird for which hunting is permitted are still in decline, including black grouse, capercaillie and hazel grouse, is the Commission considering removing these birds from the list of huntable species in Annex II to the directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Responsibility for implementing the EU Birds Directive (2009/147/EC ([1])) lies first and foremost with the Member States. It is also the responsibility of Member States to make sure that hunting species listed in Annex II of the Birds Directive complies with the principles of wise use and is compatible as regards the population of these species as required by Article 7 of the Birds Directive.

When the Commission has reason to believe there may be problems with implementation, such as evidence of illegal hunting or trapping, it investigates the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Member States to combat these practices.

Given the persistence of illegal killing or trapping of birds in some Member States, the Commission has decided to address the issue in collaboration with stakeholders. It has commissioned a study ([2]) and produced a Roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds in the EU ([3]) which addresses monitoring and data collection, awareness-raising, enforcement, and prevention measures.

The Commission does not at present envisage a revision of the annexes of the Birds Directive. Nevertheless it has embarked together with Member States on an exercise of monitoring more closely the status of, and amongst other aspects the threats to, European wild birds through the reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and the establishment of a European red list for birds. The results are expected in 2015.

([1]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004496/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Windows XP

Is the Commission doing anything in terms of working with national government agencies, Microsoft and affected businesses to provide guidance to mitigate any negative economic consequences as Microsoft cease support for their Windows XP operating system, that is still in use within many large public and private sector bodies?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The key issue stemming from the absence of support for Windows XP is security. Given the significance of the problem (some 28% PC's worldwide are estimated to still be running XP), Microsoft has for quite some time been offering Custom Support Agreement (CSA) to large customers, but those were relatively expensive.

Microsoft did however recently decide to reduce the price of the CSAs in order to make those more widely available.

Moreover, this type of issue is quite common to all operating systems, software and hardware platforms, albeit in a smaller degree: there are certain well-known financial costs involved throughout the entire lifecycle of any ICT system, starting in procurement and ending in the phasing out or replacement of said system.

In view of the above, a Commission intervention would not be warranted.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004497/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Steroid use

A leading UK drugs and alcohol charity, CRI, has warned of a spike in the number of steroid users. The charity runs 21 needle exchanges in England and saw 2 161 steroid users in 2013, representing a rise of some 645%.

What strategy does the Commission have to assist Member State governments in tackling the casual use of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs, and raising awareness of the associated dangers?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The 2010 Preparatory Actions in the field of Sport funded the projects 'Strategy for Stopping Steroids — How to fight doping in fitness centres' (Anti-Doping Danmark and partners) and 'Fitness Against Doping' (European Health and Fitness Association and partners). The final reports confirmed the trend identified by the Honourable Member. Public authorities and civil society organisations interested in running projects in the field may apply under the new Erasmus+ Sport programme for funding.

In May 2012, the Council adopted Conclusions on Doping in Recreational Sport ([1]) inviting the Commission to launch a study on doping prevention and the EU Expert Group on Anti-Doping (established under the EU Work Plan 2011-14 and now discontinued) to submit recommendations against doping in recreational sport. The study is currently under way; the recommendations were finalised by the Expert Group in December 2013 and presented to the Council Sport Working Party in January 2014.

Regarding the wider policy context of the issue, reference is made to the answer to the Honourable Member's previous question on doping (E-003536/2014).

([1]) Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 10.5.2012 on combating doping in recreational sport. OJ C 169, 15.6.2012, 9-10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004498/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Food safety

Dr Chris Elliott, a Queen's University Belfast food safety expert who is the author of an independent inquiry commissioned by the UK Government in the wake of the Europe-wide horse meat scandal in 2013, has warned that the number of product recalls shows that 'major gaps' in the food safety chain still exist. He also told of a worrying lack of knowledge of the extent and scale of criminal operations in the food sector, and the challenges facing us in protecting the integrity of produce from 'farm to fork'.

What measures is the Commission taking at European level to continue to improve food safety checks and consumer confidence in relation to (1) EU produce and (2) produce from outside EU borders entering our market?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission has recently taken a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the existing system of official controls and the fight against fraudulent practices along the food chain. These actions include *inter alia* the creation of a network to assist the national authorities from the 28 Member States in their control and enforcement efforts in cases where the fight against fraud depends on efficient cross border cooperation. A dedicated IT tool is being established so as to enable the members of the network to rapidly exchange information and data on potential fraud cases. Specialised training to food inspectors, police and customs officers on new investigation or control techniques to detect food fraud is being designed and offered under the Better Training for Safer Food programme.

Furthermore, on 6 May 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal to review the current rules on official controls along the agri-food chain ([1]). The proposal, which is currently under consideration by the co-legislator, aims to provide national enforcers with a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools to deliver on their control duties. It requires the performance of regular unannounced controls directed at identifying intentional violations of food law and that the financial penalties applied for those violations offset the economic advantage sought by the perpetrators. The proposal also aims to strengthen the mechanisms through which national enforcers assist and cooperate with each other to fight violations of the rules which have a cross-border impact and the coordination role of the Commission in cases of widespread or recurrent violations.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health, plant reproductive material, plant protection products and amending Regulations (EC) No 999/2001, 1829/2003, 1831/2003, 1/2005, 396/2005, 834/2007, 1099/2009, 1069/2009, 1107/2009, Regulations (EU) No 1151/2012, [….]/2013, and Directives 98/58/EC, 1999/74/EC, 2007/43/EC, 2008/119/EC, 2008/120/EC and 2009/128/EC (Official controls Regulation) — COM(2013) 265 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004499/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Space flight

This week, on 12 April 2014, we mark the UN observance day for human space flight. It comes at a time when, it seems to me, there is renewed enthusiasm and excitement about exploring the unknown and learning more about the universe around us. This is very much a positive thing in a world that requires more of our young people to be encouraged to study the so-called 'STEM' subjects, upon which the leading economies of the future will be built. What better way to inspire them to take that path — as with generations previous — than the achievements and experiences of our own astronauts?

What programmes does the Commission have in place to ensure that our children and students have access to those EU citizens who have been astronauts or worked in high-level space programmes, so as to educate and inspire them to reach for the stars?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Space exploration and in particular human spaceflight is not only a powerful driver for innovation and technological progress but also a source of inspiration for citizens. It encourages young generations to study STEM subjects ([1]), raises their curiosity and motivates the next generations to embrace careers in science and technology. The Commission is involved in space exploration activities through its framework programme for research and innovation. In particular in Horizon 2020, activities focusing on projects linked with astronauts on-board the International Space Station (ISS) will be funded.

The Commission, in its outreach activities on space affairs, is also supporting space exploration and collaborating with European astronauts. Examples include the Comic 'All you need is space' (on page 29, it is explained to the reader that the two featured ESA astronauts followed 'STEM' careers that eventually led them to become astronauts), Space Expos, and the support to the European Parliament event 'Science Rules! Meet Star Trek Actors and ESA Astronauts'. It has also produced a video on space exploration accessible on YouTube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZDi80YFPgg).

Furthermore the Commission is also developing a dedicated section on its website entitled 'your learning space' to reach out students and educators on space activities. This includes a pedagogical web game for the younger generations.

([1]) Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004501/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: PEACE III

Can the Commission evaluate the effectiveness of the PEACE III funding programme in Northern Ireland?

Question for written answer E-004504/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: PEACE III funding allocation

Can the Commission:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the PEACE III funding programme?

2. Provide a complete breakdown of funding allocated through this programme to each Member State?

Joint answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

In accordance with the shared management principle, Member States bear the responsibility for monitoring programmes, for carrying out on-going evaluations and for taking corrective measures when problems arise.

The Commission may also carry out on-going evaluations on its own initiative and in partnership with the Member States. However, in line with the above principles, it will only conduct such evaluations where necessary and where they are more effective than evaluations undertaken by the Member States (e.g. strategic evaluations having an EU-wide dimension).

The Members States have carried out several evaluations of the PEACE III programme which are available at www.seupb.eu and provide a thorough analysis of the effectiveness and achievement of the programme to date. The final report on the implementation of the programme, including an assessment of results and impacts, is due on 31 March 2017.

PEACE III is a European Territorial Cooperation programme implemented between the United Kingdom and Ireland. It has a total budget allocation of EUR 333 million of which EUR 225 million are covered from the EU budget. Since this is a cross-border cooperation programme which benefits the entire cross-border programme area there is no subdivision of funds between the participating countries.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004502/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Smog in London

Thought to have been caused by a mixture of dust from the Sahara, emissions from continental Europe, light south-easterly winds and domestic pollution, smog in London and other parts of the UK has recently hit the headlines.

How does the Commission evaluate the level of smog and/or air quality in our cities, and what is it doing to combat smog?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe ([1]) requires Member States to assess and report the level of air pollution in their territory. The directive allows Member States to deduct the exceedances attributable to natural sources (e.g. Sahara dust). In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity embedded in the directive, it is for the Member States to decide on the measures to be taken on their territory.

The Commission evaluates the levels of air quality based on the annual air quality reports submitted by the Member States no later than nine months after the end of each year.

The review of the thematic strategy of air pollution ([2]) confirmed that the EU air quality standards are widely exceeded (e.g. PM_{10}, NO_2), including in densely populated areas. Therefore, the proposed Clean Air Quality Package contains proposals for reinforced action that should enable further emission reductions and improvements of air quality by 2020 and beyond. If implemented, the proposed actions should result in considerable benefits for the health of EU citizens and the environment.

As Guardian of the Treaty, the Commission also enforces EU air quality legislation and several infringements procedures are being pursued. They trigger the Member States into adopting or reviewing their air quality plans with the objective to ensure that the limit values are being met.

([1]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004505/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: European Social Fund

Can the Commission:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the European Social Fund programme?

2. Provide a complete breakdown of funding allocated through this programme to each Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. In December 2013, the Commission launched its *ex-post* evaluations on the Structural Funds' programming period 2007-2013. With regards to the ESF, these evaluations focus on the following:

— Investing in human capital,

— Supporting the integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market and society, and

— Access to Employment.

These *ex-post* evaluations aim to examine the extent to which resources were used, the effectiveness, efficiency and socioeconomic impact of the ESF. They also intend to draw conclusions for the policy on economic and social cohesion in the new programming period 2014-2020. The results are expected in the first half of 2015.

The former evaluations of the ESF can be found under this link:
http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?pager.offset=0&langId=en&mode=advancedSubmit&policyArea=0&subCategory=0&year=0&country=0&type=0&advSearchKey=evaluationesf

2. All funding allocated by the European Social Fund per Member State for the programming period 2007-2013 can be found on the ESF website ([1]). As the programmes for the new programming period are still being prepared, no such figures are yet available for the period.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=443&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004506/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: European Cohesion Fund

Can the Commission:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the European Cohesion Fund programme?

2. Provide a complete breakdown of funding allocated through this programme to each Member State?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. The Commission's independent evaluation of the Cohesion Fund in 2000-2006 was completed in 2012 and is published at the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost2006/wpe_en.htm

The evaluation concluded that the projects funded contributed significantly to the improvement of the trans-European transport network and to helping countries comply with EU environmental directives.

In 2007-2013 the Cohesion Fund was programmed together with the European Regional Development Fund in cohesion policy programmes. The Commission has launched the *ex post* evaluation of these programmes and the results will be available by the end of 2015.

2. For the 2014-2020 period, the requested data is available on the Inforegio website ([1]). The same applies for the 2007-2013 period ([2]). The latest state of play of 2007-2013 Cohesion Fund financial implementation per Member State (cut-off date 24 April) is provided in the annex.

([1]) See table 'Total allocations of Cohesion Policy': http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_en.cfm
([2]) See table EU budget commitments by fund/by year http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/impact/evaluation/data_en.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004507/14
to the Commission
Vicky Ford (ECR)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Publication of annual reports on better lawmaking agenda and net costs to businesses of new proposals

Reducing the costs that EU rules impose on businesses is a critical element of boosting competitiveness and growth. Transparency regarding these costs ensures that businesses and citizens are properly informed about the decisions that affect them.

In its report 'EU regulatory fitness and subsidiarity and proportionality — 19th report on Better Lawmaking covering the year 2011' (2013/2077(INI)), Parliament called on the Commission to:

'…prepare an annual report focusing on the broader better lawmaking agenda, containing a statement of progress on the initiatives launched by the Commission, including a statement of net costs to business, as well as social costs, of the new proposals adopted by the Commission in the preceding 12 months'.

What preparations is the Commission putting in place to ensure the publication of such reports?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission is committed to meeting EU policy goals in a cost-effective way, avoiding all unnecessary regulatory burdens.

The Commission's Communications on the follow-up to the Top10 Consultation of SMEs on EU Regulation (COM(2013) 446) and on results and next steps under the Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme (REFIT) (COM(2013) 685) identify over 100 individual actions to simplify and reduce regulatory burden. In June 2014, the Commission intends to publish a communication on the state of play under REFIT which will include a scoreboard reporting on the implementation of these actions. REFIT is a rolling programme with an annual screening of the legislative stock and annual reporting.

The Commission makes quantitative estimates of impacts when this is possible, given data availability, and proportionate. However, simply adding up the cost (and benefit) figures in each impact assessment would not give a full or accurate picture. Often the Commission's proposal is changed during the legislative procedure, following which Member States make implementation choices. Therefore the costs (and benefits) of the final legislation can differ from the estimates in the Commission's impact assessments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004508/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Risk of diclofenac to Spanish vultures

The veterinary drug diclofenac is widely known to have led to a decline in vulture populations in India, Pakistan and Nepal. The drug was used to treat farm animals and often remained in the carcasses of dead animals, which were fed on by vultures. Diclofenac can cause fatal renal failure in vultures and is thought to be responsible for a 99% decline in some vulture species in the three countries. Since the drug was banned in India, vulture populations have begun to recover.

Diclofenac has now been authorised for use in domestic animals in Italy and Spain. The vast majority of the four vulture species found in Europe live in Spain, including the Cinereous vulture, which is listed as a priority species under the EU's LIFE programme.

Vulture-friendly alternatives to diclofenac exist and are now being used in India.

Is the Commission aware of the threat posed to Europe's vultures by the use of diclofenac in domestic animals?

Given that there is strong evidence that the use of diclofenac in farm animals will threaten already endangered species, is the Commission considering a Europe-wide ban on the use of the drug as a veterinary medicine?

What action is the Commission taking to ensure that Member States are meeting their obligations under the Birds Directive and EU legislation on veterinary drugs?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issue mentioned by the Honourable Member.

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E003382/2014 by the Honourable Member Nuno Melo.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-004510/14
до Комисията
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(10 април 2014 г.)

Относно: Доброволните изследвания за наблюдение на загубата на пчелни колонии в ЕС

На 7 април беше публикувано проучването Epilobee, направено въз основа на резултатите от провежданите на доброволни начала изследвания в 17 държави членки за наблюдение на загубата на пчелни колонии. От страна на ЕК за изследванията в периода 2012—2013 г. бяха предоставени 3,3 млн. евро. Те бяха продължени и през 2013—2014 г. с допълнителен ресурс от 1,8 млн. евро.

В тази връзка:

Според ЕК, каква е възможността в бъдеще за задължително включване на всички 28 държави членки в изследванията?

Възможно ли е постигането на 100 % финансиране от страна на Съюза на тези изследвания?

Кои са органите в България, с които ЕК се е свързала и които е приканила да участват в провеждането им?

Как ЕК ще гарантира, че пчеларите в държавите членки са информирани за възможността страните им да участват в наблюдението на загубата на пчелни колонии?

Отговор, даден от г-н Борг от името на Комисията
(22 май 2014 г.)

Изследването за наблюдение на загубите на пчелни семейства ([1]) продължава през 2013—2014 г. ([2]) под надзора на компетентните ветеринарни органи на участващите държави членки.

Съгласно съществуващото правно основание за тяхното финансиране провеждането на тези изследвания не може да стане задължително. ([3]) В неотдавнашната си законодателна резолюция във връзка с предложението на Комисията за нов регламент за управлението на разходите в различни области, една от които е здравеопазването на животните ([4]), Европейският парламент потвърди принципите и основните елементи на това правно основание, което не изключва възможността за 100 % финансово участие от ЕС за този род изследвания. Въпреки това прилагането на тази ставка би било извънредно голямо изключение, тъй като общият подход за разходите във ветеринарната област обикновено предвижда съфинансиране от ЕС в размер на 50 %. Предоставеното съфинансиране в размер на 70 % за допустимите разходи, свързани с посоченото изследване, вече надхвърля средния процент за финансовото участие на Съюза. Това е оправдано от желанието на Комисията да насърчи държавите членки да участват в изследването, като същевременно и те поемат част от финансовата отговорност с цел да се гарантира оптимално използване на публичните средства.

Комисията още не е взела решение относно бъдещи действия, които може да се предприемат с оглед на окончателните резултати от изследването. Поради това Комисията не може да предостави информация кои органи в България биха могли да участват, както и по какъв начин заинтересованите страни ще бъдат информирани за евентуални подобни инициативи в бъдеще.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/docs/bee-report_en.pdf
([2]) Решение за изпълнение 2013/512/ЕС на Комисията, ОВ L 279, 19.10.2013 г., стр. 67.
([3]) Решение 2009/470/ЕО на Съвета от 25 май 2009 г. относно разходите във ветеринарната област, ОВ L 155, 18.6.2009 г., стр. 30.
([4]) COM(2013) 327 final: Предложение за Регламент на Европейския парламент и на Съвета за установяване на разпоредби за управлението на разходите във връзка с хранителната верига, здравеопазването на животните и хуманното отношение към тях и във връзка със здравето на растенията и растителния репродуктивен материал, за изменение на директиви 98/56/ЕО, 2000/29/ЕО и 2008/90/ЕО на Съвета, на регламенти (ЕО) № 178/2002, (ЕО) № 882/2004 и (ЕО) № 396/2005, на Директива 2009/128/ЕО и на Регламент (ЕО) № 1107/2009 и за отмяна на решения 66/399/ЕИО, 76/894/ЕИО и 2009/470/ЕО на Съвета.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004510/14
to the Commission
Mariya Gabriel (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Voluntary research to monitor the loss of honeybee colonies in the EU

The Epilobee study was published on 7 April 2014, based on the findings of the voluntary research conducted in 17 Member States to monitor the loss of honeybee colonies. The Commission, for its part, granted EUR 3.3 million for the research in the period 2012-2013. That amount was supplemented in the period 2013-2014 with an additional amount of EUR 1.8 million.

Can the Commission state, in this connection:

Whether, in future, it might be made obligatory for such research to be conducted in all 28 Member States?

Whether the EU could provide 100% financing for that research?

Which bodies it is in contact with in Bulgaria that would be called on to take part in that research?

How it will ensure that beekeepers in the Member States are informed of the possibility for their countries to take part in monitoring the loss of honeybee colonies?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The surveillance study on bee losses ([1]) is still ongoing in 2013/2014 ([2]), under the supervision of the veterinary authorities of the participating Member States.

These studies cannot be made compulsory under the existing legal basis for their financing ([3]). The principles and most important elements of this legal basis have been confirmed by the recent European Parliament legislative resolution on the Commission proposal for a new Regulation for the management of expenditure relating *inter alia* to animal health ([4]), that does not exclude the possibility of 100% EU financing rate for studies like the one in question. However, this rate would be very exceptional, as the general approach for expenditure in the veterinary field usually foresees an EU co-financing rate of 50%. The co-financing at a rate of 70% granted for the eligible expenditure related to the study in question is already higher than average. This is justified by the Commission willingness to establish an incentive for Member States participation in this study, while leaving them also part of the financial responsibility to ensure the overall best possible use of public money.

The Commission has not yet taken any decision on the follow up actions that could be undertaken in the future, in the light of the final results of the study. Thus it cannot provide information on which authorities in Bulgaria could be involved and how stakeholders would be informed about possible similar initiatives in the future.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/docs/bee-report_en.pdf
([2]) Commission Implementing Decision 2013/5012/EU, OJ L 279 19.10.2013, p. 67.
([3]) Council Decision 2009/470/EC of 25 May 2009 on expenditure in the veterinary field, OJ L 155, 18.6.2009, p. 30.
([4]) COM(2013) 327 final. Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down provisions for the management of expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and animal welfare, and relating to plant health and plant reproductive material, amending Council Directives 98/56/EC, 2000/29/EC and 2008/90/EC, Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) No 882/2004 and (EC) No 396/2005, Directive 2009/128/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 and repealing Council Decisions 66/399/EEC, 76/894/EEC and 2009/470/EC.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004511/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Convención Internacional sobre la Protección de los Derechos de Todos los Trabajadores Migratorios y de sus Familiares

De los diez principales instrumentos para la protección de los derechos humanos promulgados por Naciones Unidas, el único que no ha sido ratificado por ninguno de los 28 Estados miembros de la Unión Europea es la Convención Internacional sobre la Protección de los Derechos de Todos los Trabajadores Migratorios y de sus Familiares. Con la ratificación de este instrumento no se lograría otra cosa que la explícita aplicación al fenómeno migratorio de aquellos derechos fundamentales que ya han sido ampliamente reconocidos por los Estados miembros.

Se estima que, en el territorio comprendido por estos veintiocho Estados europeos, residen alrededor de veinte millones de nacionales de terceros países. La extensamente documentada explotación sufrida por los trabajadores migratorios en Europa, sus precarias condiciones laborales, o los tristes acontecimientos ocurridos recientemente, debidos al represivo control de fronteras, son prueba de la insuficiencia de los mecanismos existentes en la actualidad para la protección de los derechos de estos trabajadores, así como de la necesidad de una política inmigratoria común en la Unión Europea, acorde con los estándares internacionales en derechos humanos.

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la necesidad de la ratificación por los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea de la Convención Internacional sobre la Protección de los Derechos de Todos los Trabajadores Migratorios y de sus Familiares?

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la implementación por la propia Unión Europea de los principios y derechos recogidos en la Convención Internacional sobre la Protección de los Derechos de Todos los Trabajadores Migratorios y de sus Familiares, como marco de referencia para una política inmigratoria común?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de julio de 2014)

La convención de las Naciones Unidas afecta a las competencias de la UE, pero la Unión no es parte en la convención y no participó en su adopción. Por consiguiente, la ratificación de la convención por parte de los Estados miembros de la UE exigiría una autorización previa de la Unión para aquellos elementos que afectaran a sus competencias.

En 2010 se llevó a cabo un análisis detallado acerca de la incidencia de la convención en el acervo de la UE. Las conclusiones fueron que los instrumentos de la Unión aplicables entonces ofrecían una protección suficiente tanto a los inmigrantes regulares como a los irregulares y que, en una serie de cuestiones, iban todavía más allá de las disposiciones generales de la Convención Internacional sobre la Protección de los Derechos de Todos los Trabajadores Migratorios y de sus Familiares.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004511/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families

Only one of the UN's ten core human rights instruments has yet to be ratified by the 28 EU Member States: the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Ratifying this instrument would ensure that the fundamental human rights that have already been universally recognised by the Member States were officially extended to cover migrants.

An estimated 20 million third-country nationals live in the 28 Member States. The widely documented exploitation suffered by migrant workers in the EU, their precarious working conditions and tragic recent events caused by the brutal actions of border control officers all demonstrate the current system's inability to protect workers' rights and the need for a common EU immigration policy that complies with international human rights standards.

Does the Commission believe that the EU Member States should ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families?

Does the Commission think it would be beneficial for the EU to adopt the principles and rights outlined in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families as a frame of reference for a common immigration policy?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2014)

The UN convention touches upon EU competences but the EU is not a party to the convention and was not involved in its adoption. Therefore the ratification of the UN convention by EU Member States would require prior authorisation by the EU for those elements that affect EU compentences.

A detailed analysis on the impact of the convention on EU *acquis* was carried out in 2010, which concluded that the EU instruments applicable at the time provide sufficient protection for both regular and irregular immigrants and go even further, on a number of issues, than the general provisions of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004512/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Paz entre Israel y Palestina

Las negociaciones desarrolladas entre las autoridades palestinas e israelíes desde julio de 2013 y auspiciadas por el vicepresidente de los EE.UU., John Kerry, están llegando a la fecha declarada como límite para alcanzar algún acuerdo, es decir, el 29 de abril. No parece que el proceso llegue a ningún resultado concreto que suponga avances hacia una paz verdadera entre Israel y Palestina.

¿Qué opinión le merece a la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante el desarrollo del proceso iniciado el pasado julio?

En su opinión, ¿a qué razones responde el no haber podido alcanzar acuerdos entre las partes?

¿Tienen las autoridades europeas la intención de lanzar algún tipo de iniciativa e implicarse más activamente para avanzar hacia la paz entre Israel y Palestina, tras el probable fracaso del proceso actual?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión ha participado activamente en una serie de esfuerzos diplomáticos en apoyo de las negociaciones entre Israel y Palestina patrocinada por los Estados Unidos, que se iniciaron en agosto de 2013. En una declaración de 27 de abril, la Comisión expresó su gran preocupación por los últimos acontecimientos que amenazan la continuación del proceso de paz tras el plazo inicial de 29 de abril y la viabilidad de la solución de dos Estados.

Aun así, las negociaciones siguen siendo la mejor manera de avanzar. Los amplios esfuerzos desplegados en los últimos meses no deben ser baldíos. Tanto el primer ministro Netanyahu como el presidente Abbás deben colaborar de buena fe y asumir los difíciles compromisos y tomar las decisiones necesarias para aprovechar esta oportunidad única para la paz.

En la actualidad, la UE pide a todas las partes que actúen con la máxima contención y eviten cualquier medida unilateral que pueda empeorar aún más la situación de bloqueo. Al mismo tiempo, seguirá estando atenta a la situación y a sus consecuencias más amplias y actuará en función de estas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004512/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Israeli-Palestinian peace talks

The deadline of 29 April 2014 for reaching an agreement in the on-going negotiations between Palestinian and Israeli authorities that began in July 2013, led by US Vice-President John Kerry, is fast approaching. No tangible progress appears to have been made towards establishing genuine peace between Israel and Palestine.

What does Vice-President/High Representative Ashton think about the state of the peace talks that were launched last July?

In her view, why has it not been possible for the two countries to reach an agreement?

Does the EU intend to take any action and adopt a more active role in the pursuit of peace between Israel and Palestine in the wake of the likely failure of the current talks?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Commission has been actively involved in a variety of diplomatic efforts supporting the US-brokered Israeli-Palestinian negotiations which started in August 2013. In a statement of 27 April, the Commission expressed great concern related to recent developments threatening the peace process beyond the initial deadline of 29 April and the viability of a two-state solution.

Still, negotiations remain the best way forward. The extensive efforts deployed in recent months must not go to waste. Both PM Netanyahu and President Abbas should engage in good faith and make the difficult compromises and decisions needed to seize this unique opportunity for peace.

The EU now calls on all sides to exercise maximum restraint and to avoid any unilateral action which may further undermine the deadlock. At the same time, it continues to monitor the situation and its broader implications and will act accordingly.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004513/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Key Safety Systems Srl: tutela dei lavoratori e salvaguardia dei livelli occupazionali

La società *Key Safety Systems Srl*, operante nel settore della componentistica per autovetture, sta procedendo al licenziamento, con conseguente collocazione in mobilità, di oltre un terzo del totale dei dipendenti in forza all'unità produttiva di Colleferro, in provincia di Roma, ritenuti strutturalmente eccedenti rispetto alle esigenze aziendali.

Il sito di Colleferro si distingue per la produzione di moduli *airbag* e *inflator*. La società ha dichiarato che tale decisione è motivata dalla necessità di far fronte alla crescente concorrenza di paesi esteri che, applicando costi di produzione più bassi, hanno ridotto le sue quote di mercato.

La *Key Safety Systems* ha inoltre precisato che, trattandosi di esuberi di carattere strutturale, non verranno utilizzate la Cassa integrazione guadagni straordinaria, i contratti di solidarietà e/o forme generalizzate di riduzioni dell'orario di lavoro.

Considerate le ricadute negative che si produrrebbero con tali licenziamenti e con il relativo ridimensionamento aziendale sul tessuto economico e sociale della zona interessata, si chiede alla Commissione di far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della vicenda, in particolar modo del fatto che il 13 maggio 2014, in mancanza di ulteriori ammortizzatori sociali, 154 lavoratori verranno collocati in mobilità;

2. se la *Key Safety Systems Srl* ha rispettato le disposizioni della direttiva 98/59/CE in materia di licenziamenti collettivi ed in particolare l'articolo 2;

3. se, nell'espletamento della procedura di licenziamento collettivo, sono state rispettate le previsioni della direttiva 94/45/CE, modificata dalla direttiva 2009/38/CE, della direttiva 2002/14/CE relativa alla procedura di informazione e di consultazione dei lavoratori, della direttiva 2001/23/CE sul mantenimento dei diritti dei lavoratori e della direttiva 2008/94/CE;

4. se e con quali strumenti intende intervenire in questa vicenda a tutela dei livelli occupazionali dell'unità produttiva di Colleferro;

5. se intende attivare il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione;

6. come considera il fenomeno della delocalizzazione delle imprese, in particolare con riferimento alla perdita del posto di lavoro dei dipendenti del sito produttivo dismesso.

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

1.-4.-6. La Commissione non è a conoscenza dei dettagli riguardanti l'attuale ristrutturazione all'interno dell'unità di Celleferro della Key Safety Systems Srl e non è competente a interferire nelle decisioni della società o nel dialogo sociale interno all'impresa. Si esortano, tuttavia, le parti in causa ad attenersi alle buone pratiche in materia di anticipazione e gestione socialmente responsabile delle ristrutturazioni, come indicato nella comunicazione del 13 dicembre 2013, che istituisce un quadro di qualità UE per l'anticipazione dei cambiamenti e delle ristrutturazioni ([1]).

2.-3. La Commissione non è in grado di valutare i fatti o di stabilire se un'azienda privata abbia rispettato o no le disposizioni nazionali che attuano le normative dell'UE. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, tribunali compresi, garantire che la legislazione nazionale che recepisce le direttive UE, cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento, sia applicata in modo corretto ed efficace dal datore di lavoro in questione, tenendo conto delle circostanze specifiche del caso.

5. L'Italia ha la possibilità di chiedere l'intervento del Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG), a condizione di dimostrare che gli esuberi del personale in questione sono correlati alla globalizzazione del commercio, alla crisi finanziaria ed economica globale. La Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare il regolamento FEG (2014-2020) ([2]) per maggiori informazioni sulle nuove norme di tale Fondo a partire dall'inizio del 2014.

([1]) COM(2013) 882 def.
([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1309/2013, GU L 347 del 20.12.2013, pag. 855.

L'onorevole parlamentare può consultare le persone di contatto FEG per l'Italia nel caso desideri sapere se è stata prevista una domanda in favore dei lavoratori dichiarati in esubero da Micron. I relativi recapiti si possono trovare sul sito del FEG. ([3])

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=it

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004513/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Key Safety Systems Srl: protecting workers and safeguarding employment levels

Key Safety Systems Srl, a vehicle component supplier, is making more than a third of the workforce redundant at its Colleferro factory, in the province of Rome; the workers concerned are considered — in structural terms — to be surplus to company requirements.

The Colleferro factory makes airbag and inflator units. The company has said that it has taken this decision because it is having to face increasingly keen competition from foreign countries, which, because of the lower production costs, has led to a fall in its market share.

Key Safety Systems has also stated that, since the labour surplus is of a structural nature, it will not make use of the Extraordinary Redundancy Benefit Fund, short-time working, and/or arrangements applying shorter working hours across the board.

These redundancies will have adverse effects, and the economic and social fabric of the region concerned will be correspondingly scaled down.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case and especially of the fact that, as there are no other social safety nets, 154 workers will be made redundant on 13 May 2014?

2. Has Key Safety Systems Srl complied with Directive 98/59/EC on collective redundancies and in particular Article 2 thereof?

3. Has the collective redundancy procedure been carried out in accordance with Directive 94/45/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/38/EC, Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees, Directive 2001/23/EC on the safeguarding of employees' rights, and Directive 2008/94/EC?

4. Will the Commission intervene — and, if so, by what means — in order to safeguard employment levels at the Colleferro factory?

5. Does it intend to activate the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund?

6. What is the Commission's attitude to company relocation, in particular as regards the job losses at production sites which are closed down?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1, 4 and 6. The Commission is not aware of the details of the current restructuring within the Celleferro factory of Key Safety Systems, Srl nor does it have powers to interfere in the company's decisions or in the social dialogue procedures internal to the company. It does, however, urge all concerned to follow good practices in respect of anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring as outlined in its communication of 13 December 2013 establishing an EU Quality Framework for Anticipation of Change and Restructuring ([1]).

2 and 3. The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether a private company has or has not complied with any national provisions which serve to implement EC law. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directives, to which the Honourable Member refers, is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

5. Provided that the workers' redundancies can be linked to trade related globalisation or to the global financial and economic crisis, Italy has the possibility to apply for support from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the EGF Regulation (2014-2020) ([2]) for more details on the new rules of this Fund from the beginning of 2014.

([1]) COM(2013)882 final.
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1309/2013, OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013, p 855.

The Honourable Member may wish to communicate with the EGF Contact Persons for Italy, should she wish to know whether an application is being planned in support of workers being made redundant by Micron. The relevant contact details can be found on the EGF website ([3]).

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=581&langId=pt

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004514/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo sobre datos personales

Tras tener conocimiento de la sentencia del Tribunal de Justicia Europeo en relación con la Directiva 2006/24/CE sobre la conservación de datos generados o tratados en relación con la prestación de servicios de comunicaciones electrónicas de acceso público o de redes públicas de comunicaciones, declarándola inválida, ¿qué pasos piensa dar la Comisión?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de junio de 2014)

Las cuestiones planteadas por el Tribunal son muy complejas y es necesario realizar una cuidadosa evaluación de su impacto. Dicha evaluación se llevará a cabo en consulta con las correspondientes partes interesadas y de modo que se tengan en cuenta todos los intereses legítimos involucrados. La Comisión tiene la intención de dedicar a dicha evaluación el tiempo necesario. Ello permitirá a la Comisión estudiar durante los próximos meses si es necesario introducir una nueva propuesta legislativa.

Por otro lado, es evidente que la sentencia subraya la necesidad de una rápida adopción de la propuesta de reforma de la protección de datos y, en particular, de la propuesta de Directiva aplicable al ámbito de los servicios con funciones coercitivas.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004514/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Judgment of the European Court of Justice on personal data

What action is the Commission planning to take following the judgment of the European Court of Justice concerning Directive 2006/24/EC on the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publically available electronic communications services or of public communications networks, which it declared was invalid?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The issues raised by the Court are very complex and require a careful assessment of their impacts. Such an assessment will be carried out in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner to take on board all legitimate interests involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation. On that basis, the Commission will be able to investigate in the coming months whether there is a need for a new legislative proposal.

Furthermore, the judgment of course underlines the need for the swift adoption of the proposed Data Protection reform and in particular of the draft Directive which applies to the law enforcement sector.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004516/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 april 2014)

Betreft: Ruime interpretatie van gegevensbescherming

De Nederlandse regering overweegt een wetsvoorstel aan te nemen waardoor het recht om de gegevens van nummerplaten van motorvoertuigen automatisch te bewaren, wordt uitgebreid. Met dit voorstel kan de Nederlandse regering de nummerplaat van alle voertuigen registeren en gedurende vier weken opslagen. Het doel van het voorstel is de vergaarde gegevens te kunnen gebruiken voor de opsporing en vervolging van misdadigers.

Tot nog toe werden alleen de nummerplaten van specifieke verdachten geregistreerd en onderzocht.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van het voorstel dat door de Nederlandse regering zal worden aangenomen?

2. Heeft de Nederlandse regering de Commissie geraadpleegd in verband met de mogelijke aanname van dit voorstel?

3. Zo ja, kan de Commissie een overzicht verschaffen van de data waarop de Nederlandse regering de Commissie heeft geraadpleegd over de overeenstemming van dit voorstel met de Europese wetgeving, en de inhoud en het resultaat van de raadplegingen?

4. Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat dit voorstel volledig strookt met artikel 8 van het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens en in overeenstemming is met het recente vonnis van het Hof van Justitie over de geldigheid van de richtlijn gegevensbewaring ([1])?

5. Is de Commissie van mening dat het onderwerp van de gegevensbewaring in het huidige voorstel goed gedefinieerd en duidelijk afgebakend is in het licht van het vonnis van het Hof van Justitie?

6. Is de Commissie van mening dat de periode van vier weken voor de massale gegevensbewaring, zoals voorgesteld door de Nederlandse regering, aan de voorwaarden voldoet van rechtmatige gegevensbewaring zoals geformuleerd in het vonnis van het Hof van Justitie?

7. Indien het antwoord op vraag 4 negatief is, wat is de Commissie van plan te doen om te voorkomen dat het voorstel wordt aangenomen door de Nederlandse regering?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(20 juni 2014)

De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van het voorstel.

Het voorstel geeft geen uitvoering aan de uitvoering van het recht van de Unie. Met name is Richtlijn 95/46/EG betreffende de bescherming van persoonsgegevens ([2]) niet van toepassing op politiële en justitiële activiteiten. Ook is het Kaderbesluit 2008/977/JBZ ([3]) slechts van toepassing op de grensoverschrijdende uitwisseling van persoonsgegevens tussen lidstaten in het kader van politiële en justitiële samenwerking. In een dergelijk geval is het aan de lidstaat om te beoordelen of het voorstel in overeenstemming is met het Europees Verdrag voor de rechten van de mens.

De Commissie wil erop wijzen dat het voorstel van de Commissie voor een richtlijn inzake de bescherming van persoonsgegevens dat in januari 2012 werd voorgesteld als onderdeel van het hervormingspakket, wel van toepassing is op de verwerking van persoonsgegevens bij politiële en justitiële samenwerking op nationaal niveau. ([4])

([1]) C-293/12 en C-594/12.

([2]) Richtlijn 95/46/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 24.10.1995 betreffende de bescherming van natuurlijke personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens en betreffende het vrije verkeer van die gegevens, PB L 281 van 23.11.1995, blz. 31.

([3]) Kaderbesluit 2008/977/JBZ van de Raad van 27 november 2008 over de bescherming van persoonsgegevens die worden verwerkt in het kader van de politiële en justitiële samenwerking in strafzaken, PB L 350/60, 30.12.2008.

([4]) Voorstel voor een richtlijn van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende de bescherming van natuurlijke personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens door bevoegde autoriteiten met het oog op de voorkoming, het onderzoek, de opsporing of de vervolging van strafbare feiten of de tenuitvoerlegging van straffen, en betreffende het vrije verkeer van die gegevens (COM(2012) 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004516/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Stretching data protection

The Netherlands Government is considering adopting a proposed law extending the right to automatically record motor vehicle number plates. Under this proposal, it will be possible for the Netherlands Government to record all vehicle number plates and to retain the data for a period of four weeks. The purpose of the proposal is to enable the data collected to be used in the detection and prosecution of criminals.

Up until now, only the number plates of specified suspects were recorded and investigated.

1. Is the Commission aware of the proposal to be adopted by the Netherlands Government?

2. Has the Netherlands Cabinet consulted the Commission in connection with the possible adoption of this proposal?

3. If so, can the Commission provide an overview of the dates on which the Netherlands Government consulted the Commission regarding the compliance of this proposal with European law, and the content and outcome of the consultations?

4. Can the Commission state that this proposal complies fully with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and is in line with the recent Court of Justice (CJEU) judgment on the validity of the Data Retention Directive ([1])?

5. In the Commission's opinion, is the subject of data retention well-defined and clearly delimited in the current proposal in the light of the CJEU judgment?

6. Does the Commission think that the four-week period for mass data retention, as proposed by the Netherlands Government, fulfils the conditions of lawful data retention as formulated in the CJEU judgment?

7. If the answer to question four is negative, what does the Commission intend to do to prevent the proposal being adopted by the Netherlands Government?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

The Commission is not aware of the proposal.

The proposal does not constitute implementation of Union law. Especially, Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of personal data ([2]) is not applicable to police and judicial activities. Also, the framework Decision 2008/977/JHA ([3]) applies only to cross-border exchanges of personal data between Member States within the framework of police and judicial cooperation. In such a case it is up to the Member State to assess whether the proposal is in line with the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Commission would like to recall that the Commission proposal for a Data Protection Directive, proposed in January 2012 as part of the reform package, is applicable to the processing of personal data in the area of judicial and police cooperation at the domestic level ([4]).

([1]) C-293/12 and C-594/12.

([2]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJ L 281 of 23.11.1995, p. 31.

([3]) Council Framework Decision 2008/977/JHA of 27.11.2008 on the protection of personal data processed in the framework of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, OJ, L 350/60, 30.12.2008.

([4]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and the free movement of such data (COM(2012) 10.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004517/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 april 2014)

Betreft: Toetreding van de EU tot CITES

Tot op heden had de EU enkel een waarnemersstatus bij de Overeenkomst inzake de internationale handel in bedreigde in het wild levende dier- en plantensoorten (CITES) omdat de oorspronkelijke tekst van de overeenkomst uitsluitend voorzag in lidmaatschap van landen. Op 29 november 2013 is evenwel een amendement op de overeenkomst (de Gaborone-clausule) in werking getreden, waardoor nu ook regionale organisaties voor economische integratie zoals de EU kunnen toetreden. Bijgevolg is het nu voor de EU mogelijk partij te worden bij CITES. In december 2013 heeft de Commissie een voorstel voor een besluit van de Raad goedgekeurd waardoor de EU dit mag doen, dat momenteel door de Raad en het Parlement wordt behandeld.

In een informatiepakket voor partijen wordt het volgende opgemerkt:

„Als partij zou de Europese Unie garant staan voor een coherent standpunt van de EU en tijdens CITES-onderhandelingen open staan voor het concept van duurzaam gebruik. De Europese Unie steunt ten volle de beginselen van de overeenkomst en is zeer ontvankelijk voor de bekommernissen van ontwikkelingslanden. Toetreding zou de Commissie in staat stellen namens de Europese Unie te onderhandelen en als katalysator te fungeren voor het bereiken van een evenwichtig compromis tussen de standpunten van de 27 lidstaten."

Kan de Commissie tegen deze achtergrond het volgende toelichten:

1. Welke rechten en plichten zullen de Commissie en de lidstaten precies hebben na de toetreding van de EU tot CITES?

2. Hoe zal de toetreding van de EU tot CITES de EU-procedures op CITES-bijeenkomsten beïnvloeden (bijvoorbeeld, wie zal namens de EU de onderhandelingen leiden, verklaringen afleggen en stemmen)?

3. Welke veranderingen zal het EU-lidmaatschap van CITES inhouden voor de interne besluitvormingsprocedure van de EU voor en tijdens bijeenkomsten van de conferentie van partijen, het wetenschappelijk comité en het permanent comité van CITES?

4. Hoe zal de EU een gemeenschappelijk standpunt vaststellen of een overeengekomen standpunt op bijeenkomsten van de conferentie van partijen van CITES kunnen wijzigen als niet alle lidstaten aanwezig zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(4 juni 2014)

1. De rechten en plichten van de lidstaten onder CITES zullen niet worden beïnvloed door de toetreding van de EU. De EU neemt als een partij van CITES alle rechten en plichten die onder de EU-bevoegdheid vallen op zich.

2. Dankzij de toetreding van de EU tot CITES zal de EU op adequate wijze vertegenwoordigd zijn op de CITES-vergaderingen in overeenstemming met de Verdragen en gevestigde praktijken voor externe vertegenwoordiging. De EU zal stemmen over alle aangelegenheden die in het gemeenschapsrecht zijn geregeld of gevolgen hebben voor het gemeenschapsrecht, zoals Verordening 338/97 ([1]) of andere relevante EU-regelgevingen, en individuele lidstaten zullen blijven stemmen over andere zaken.

3-4. De toetreding van de EU tot CITES zal geen invloed hebben op de interne besluitvormingsprocessen van de EU of op de manier waarop de gemeenschappelijke standpunten worden vastgesteld.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 338/97 van de Raad van 9 december 1996 inzake de bescherming van in het wild levende dier- en plantensoorten door controle op het desbetreffende handelsverkeer, PB L 61 van 3.3.1997.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004517/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: EU accession to CITES

To date, the EU has held only observer status at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), given that the initial text of the convention only provided for membership by states. However, an amendment to the convention (the Gaborone amendment) allowing accession by regional economic integration organisations, such as the EU, entered into force on 29 November 2013. It is therefore now possible for the EU to become a party to the CITES. A proposal for a council decision allowing the EU to do so was adopted by the Commission in December 2013, and is currently being considered by the Council and Parliament.

The following is noted in an information pack for parties:

'The European Union, as a Party, would ensure a coherent EU position and be open to the concept of sustainable use at CITES negotiations. The European Union fully supports the principles of the Convention and is very receptive to the concerns of developing countries. Accession would enable the Commission on behalf of the European Union to lead negotiations and to be a catalyst in achieving a balanced compromise between the 27 Member States' positions.'

In view of the above, could the Commission explain the following:

1. Exactly what rights and obligations will the Commission and the Member States have after the EU's accession to the CITES?

2. How will the EU's accession to the CITES affect EU procedures at CITES meetings (for example, who will lead negotiations, make statements and cast votes on behalf of the EU)?

3. How will the EU's membership of the CITES change the EU's internal decision-making process ahead of and during meetings of the CITES Conference of the Parties, Scientific Committee and Standing Committee?

4. How will the EU agree a common position, or be able to change an agreed position, during meetings of the CITES Conference of the Parties when not all Member States are present?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. The rights and obligations of Member States under CITES are not affected by the accession of the EU. The EU will assume all rights and obligations as a Party to CITES which fall within EU competence.

2. Accession of the EU to CITES will enable the EU to be adequately represented at CITES meetings in line with the Treaties and established practices for external representation. The EU will vote on all matters covered by the *acquis* or likely to affect the *acquis*, such as Regulation 338/97 ([1]) or other relevant EU regulatory acts, and individual Member States will continue to vote on the other issues.

3 and 4. Accession of the EU to CITES will not affect the EU internal decision-making processes and the way common positions are adopted.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 of 9.12.1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein, OJ L 61, 03.3.1997.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004518/14
an die Kommission
Andreas Schwab (PPE) und Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(11. April 2014)

Betrifft: Mitteilung der Kommission „Bewertung der nationalen Reglementierungen des Berufszugangs“ (KOM(2013)0676)

In ihrer Mitteilung vom 2. Oktober 2013 über die Bewertung der nationalen Reglementierungen des Berufszugangs gibt die Kommission einen Rahmen vor, mit dem die Mitgliedstaaten in die Lage versetzt werden sollen, bis April 2015 die ersten nationalen Aktionspläne vorzulegen. Dadurch kann die Kommission gemeinsam mit den Mitgliedstaaten feststellen, ob die formalen Abschlüsse und Berufe in allen Mitgliedstaaten die gleichen Kompetenzen und Qualifikationen abdecken. Dies wird auch als konkrete Möglichkeit erachtet, die Freizügigkeit von Fachkräften zu verbessern, indem die Anzahl der regulierten Berufe in der EU verringert wird.

1. Findet es die Kommission vor dem Hintergrund, dass bestimmte Berufsgruppen mehr grenzüberschreitende Tätigkeiten oder ein größeres Mobilitätspotential aufweisen, zweckmäßig, den Transparenzmechanismus für diese Berufsgruppen zunächst einzuschränken?

2. Falls dies nicht zutrifft, räumt die Kommission den Berufsgruppen mit weniger grenzübergreifenden Tätigkeiten mehr Zeit für die Erhebung der Daten ein?

3. Welche Verfahren sollten die Mitgliedstaaten nach Ansicht der Kommission einrichten, um Berufsverbände, insbesondere Angehörige der Gesundheitsberufe, in die Ausarbeitung der Rechtfertigungen der Reglementierung, die der Kommission nach der Datenerhebung übermittelt werden müssen, einzubinden?

4. Für einige Berufe, die im Rahmen der Richtlinie über die Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen überprüft werden sollen, wurde bereits eine gegenseitige Begutachtung (Peer-Review) im Kontext der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie durchgeführt. Wie wird die Kommission unnötige Dopplungen vermeiden sowie sicherstellen, dass der vorgeschlagene Zeitrahmen für diese Berufsgruppen einzuhalten ist?

5. Über welche konkreten Zahlen oder Beispiele verfügt die Kommission, um nachzuweisen, dass die Regelung des Zugangs zu diesen Berufen erhebliche wachstumshemmende Auswirkungen nach sich zieht?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(10. Juni 2014)

Die Transparenzinitiative betrifft alle reglementierten Berufe. Allerdings wird sie in zwei Phasen durchgeführt, die jeweils auf unterschiedliche Wirtschaftszweige ([1]) ausgerichtet sind. In einer ersten Phase werden Berufe in Wirtschaftszweigen beurteilt, in denen eine Modernisierung des Regulierungsrahmens einen besonders starken Beitrag zu Beschäftigung und Wachstum leisten könnte. Andere Berufe werden in einer zweiten Phase beurteilt.

Die Mitgliedstaaten haben dem Arbeitsplan zur Durchführung der gegenseitigen Bewertung (Peer-Review) zugestimmt. Die erste Phase wird in Kürze beginnen. Über die Wirtschaftszweige der zweiten Phase wird im Jahr 2015 beraten werden.

Die Organisation von Konsultationsverfahren auf nationaler Ebene fällt weiterhin in die Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten. Nichtsdestotrotz ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass es vorteilhaft wäre, die einschlägigen Interessenträger auf nationaler Ebene miteinzubeziehen.

Die beiden Bewertungsverfahren ergänzen sich gegenseitig. Die Peer-Review wurde im Rahmen der Dienstleistungsrichtlinie ([2]) durchgeführt und bezog sich auf fünf Berufe, deren Ausübung durch Auflagen bezüglich der Rechtsformen, der Anforderungen im Hinblick auf Beteiligungen am Gesellschaftskapital und Tarife beschränkt wird. Das Ziel der gegenseitigen Bewertung der beruflichen Qualifikationen liegt darin, Einschränkungen im Zusammenhang mit Qualifikationsanforderungen zu beurteilen und gemäß den Schlussfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates ([3]) die „kumulativen Auswirkungen aller […] Beschränkungen“ zu bewerten.

Die Auswirkungen auf Mobilität und Wachstum im Zusammenhang mit reglementierten Berufen, sind Gegenstand unabhängiger Studien, die die Kommission in Auftrag gibt.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat und den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss zur Bewertung der nationalen Reglementierungen des Berufszugangs — (KOM(2013)676 endg. vom 2.10.2013).

([2]) Richtlinie 2006/123/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. Dezember 2006 über Dienstleistungen im Binnenmarkt (ABl. L 376 vom 27.12.2006, S. 36).

([3]) Schlussfolgerungen des Europäischen Rates vom 24./25. Oktober 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004518/14
à la Commission
Andreas Schwab (PPE) et Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Communication de la Commission intitulée «Évaluer les réglementations nationales en matière d'accès aux professions» (COM(2013)0676)

Dans sa communication du 2 octobre 2013 intitulée «Évaluer les réglementations nationales en matière d'accès aux professions» (COM(2013)0676), la Commission définit un cadre permettant aux États membres de présenter une première série de plans d'action nationaux pour avril 2015. Ce travail d'évaluation permettra à la Commission, en coopération avec les États membres, de déterminer si les titres et professions recouvrent les mêmes compétences et qualifications dans les différents États membres. Il est également perçu comme un moyen efficace de rendre possible la libre circulation des professionnels en réduisant le nombre de professions réglementées dans l'Union européenne.

1. Étant donné que certaines professions sont davantage liées que d'autres à des activités transfrontalières ou présentent un potentiel de mobilité plus élevé, la Commission estime-t-elle qu'il convient de limiter en priorité à ces catégories professionnelle le mécanisme de transparence?

2. Dans la négative, la Commission accordera-t-elle aux catégories professionnelles qui ont une moindre activité transfrontalière davantage de temps pour collecter les données?

3. De l'avis de la Commission, quelles sont les procédures que les États membres devraient mettre en place afin d'associer les organisations professionnelles, notamment les organisations représentant les professionnels de la santé, à la préparation des justifications concrètes qui doivent être présentées à la Commission à l'issue de la phase de collecte des données?

4. Certaines professions qui seront soumises à une évaluation au titre de la directive sur les qualifications professionnelles ont d'ores et déjà fait l'objet d'une analyse dans le cadre de l'examen par les pairs réalisé conformément à la directive sur les services. Comment la Commission évitera-t-elle les doubles emplois inutiles et comment fera-t-elle en sorte que le calendrier proposé soit tenable pour ces professions?

5. Quels chiffres ou exemples concrets la Commission a-t-elle à sa disposition pour prouver que la règlementation en matière d'accès aux professions a un effet inhibiteur considérable sur la croissance?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

L'exercice de transparence s'applique à toutes les professions réglementées qui existent, mais il est divisé en deux phases, portant chacune sur des secteurs différents ([1]). La première phase couvrira l'évaluation des professions appartenant à des secteurs où la modernisation du cadre réglementaire pourrait sensiblement contribuer à l'emploi et à la croissance. Les autres professions seront évaluées lors de la seconde phase.

Le programme de travail pour la réalisation de l'évaluation mutuelle a été approuvé par les États membres. La première phase débutera sous peu. Les secteurs de la seconde phase seront quant à eux examinés en 2015.

L'organisation des procédures de consultation à l'échelle nationale relève de la compétence des États membres. La Commission considère néanmoins qu'il serait utile d'impliquer les parties prenantes concernées au niveau national.

Les deux processus d'évaluation sont complémentaires. L'examen par les pairs réalisé conformément à la directive «services» ([2]) portait sur les restrictions d'exercice des activités pour cinq professions, telles que les exigences en matière de forme juridique, de détention du capital et de tarifs. L'évaluation mutuelle des qualifications professionnelles a pour objectif d'apprécier les restrictions liées aux exigences en matière de qualifications et, conformément aux conclusions du Conseil européen ([3]), «d'évaluer l'effet cumulé de toutes les restrictions».

En ce qui concerne l'incidence sur la mobilité et la croissance dans le contexte des professions réglementées, la Commission commande actuellement des études indépendantes sur la question.

([1]) Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil et au Comité économique et social européen — Évaluer les réglementations nationales en matière d'accès aux professions [COM(2013) 676 final du 2.10.2013].
([2]) Directive 2006/123/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 12 décembre 2006 relative aux services dans le marché intérieur, JO L 376 du 27.12.2006, p. 36.
([3]) Conclusions du Conseil européen (24 et 25 octobre 2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004518/14
to the Commission
Andreas Schwab (PPE) and Constance Le Grip (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Commission communication on evaluating national regulations on access to professions (COM(2013)0676)

In its communication of 2 October 2013 on evaluating national regulations on access to professions (COM(2013)0676), the Commission sets out a framework enabling Member States to present a first set of national action plans by April 2015. This work will allow the Commission, together with the Member States, to ascertain whether formal qualifications and occupations correspond to the same skills and qualifications in all Member States. It is also considered as an effective way of making possible the free movement of professionals by reducing the number of regulated professions in the EU.

1. Considering that certain professions have more cross-border activities or a higher potential for mobility, does the Commission consider it opportune to first limit the scope of the transparency mechanism to these professional groups?

2. If not, will the Commission give more time to those professional groups with less cross-border activities to collect data?

3. According to the Commission, what procedures should be established by Member States in order to involve professional bodies, especially those representing health professionals, when preparing specific justifications which have to be given to the Commission following the data collection?

4. Certain professions which will be subject to evaluation under the Professional Qualifications Directive have already been examined in the context of the peer review conducted under the Services Directive. How will the Commission avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure that the proposed timeframe will be sustainable for these professions?

5. What concrete figures or examples does the Commission have to prove that regulating access to professions has a significant growth-inhibiting effect?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The transparency exercise covers all existing regulated professions, but it is carried out in two phases, each comprising different sectors ([1]). In a first phase, professions will be assessed in sectors where modernisation of the regulatory framework could contribute in a particularly significant way to employment and growth. Other professions will follow in a second phase.

The work plan for carrying out the mutual evaluation has been agreed by Member States. The first phase will start shortly. The phase 2 sectors will be discussed in 2015.

The organisation of consultation procedures at national level remains within the competence of the Member States. Nonetheless, the Commission considers that it would be beneficial to involve relevant stakeholders at national level.

The two evaluation processes are complementary. The peer review conducted under the Services Directive ([2]) covered restrictions on the exercise of activities for 5 professions, such as legal forms, shareholding requirements and tariffs. The purpose of the professional qualifications mutual evaluation is to assess restrictions related to qualification requirements and, following European Council conclusions ([3]), to 'assess the cumulative effect of all restrictions'.

As regards the impact on mobility and growth in the context of regulated professions, the Commission is commissioning independent studies on this issue.

([1]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee on Evaluating national regulations on access to professions — COM(2013) 676 final, 2.10.2013.
([2]) Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12.12.2006 on services in the internal market, OJ L 376, 27.12.2006, p. 36.
([3]) Conclusions of the European Council (24/25.10.2013).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004520/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Cadmium dans les aliments

La Commission européenne a adressé le 4 avril une recommandation relative à la réduction du cadmium dans les denrées alimentaires aux États membres. L'exécutif européen leur demande d'expliquer aux agriculteurs et aux exploitants du secteur alimentaire les méthodes de réduction connues.

1. Cependant, à la surprise du lecteur, la Commission ne précise pas pour autant dans cette communication en quoi consistent ces méthodes, installant un certain flou. Pourquoi ne pas l'avoir précisé?

2. La Commission pourrait-elle entamer des recherches et recueillir des données sur les teneurs en cadmium? Si tel est déjà le cas, où en sont les conclusions de l'autorité européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

La recommandation 2014/193/UE ([1]) a pour principal objectif la collecte de données fiables sur la teneur en cadmium des principaux responsables de l'exposition au cadmium par voie alimentaire dans la perspective d'un réexamen des teneurs maximales actuellement fixées pour les denrées alimentaires. Les teneurs en cadmium peuvent, en particulier dans les denrées alimentaires d'origine végétale, être influencées par l'application d'un large éventail de mesures de réduction. Ces mesures sont citées dans les considérants de la recommandation: choix des cultures en fonction de la teneur en cadmium des sols et du schéma d'accumulation du cadmium des plantes, ajout d'amendements et de régulateurs d'acidité des sols pour réduire le transfert depuis les sols vers les cultures et utilisation de boues d'épuration, de fumier, d'engrais phosphatés, lesquels sont connus pour contribuer à la teneur en cadmium des sols.

Depuis de nombreuses années, l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments recueille des données sur la teneur en cadmium des denrées alimentaires et les a utilisées pour formuler son avis scientifique correspondant ([2]). Comme cet avis a montré la nécessité de réduire encore l'exposition au cadmium par voie alimentaire, les teneurs maximales en cadmium actuellement fixées pour les denrées alimentaires ont été revues dans la mesure du possible ([3]). Toutefois, une réduction immédiate n'étant pas envisageable pour un certain nombre de grands contributeurs à l'exposition alimentaire, la recommandation a été adoptée afin de sensibiliser les parties prenantes concernées.

([1]) Recommandation 2014/193/UE de la Commission sur la réduction de la présence de cadmium dans les denrées alimentaires (JO L 104 du 8.4.2014, p. 80).
([2]) Avis du groupe scientifique sur les contaminants de la chaîne alimentaire concernant le cadmium dans l'alimentation, donné à la demande de la Commission européenne (Scientific Opinion of the Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain. The EFSA Journal (2009) 980, p. 1-139).
([3]) Règlement (UE) n° 488/2014 de la Commission du 12 mai 2014 modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 1881/2006 en ce qui concerne les teneurs maximales en cadmium dans les denrées alimentaires (JO L 138 du 13.5.2014, p. 75).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004520/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Cadmium in food

On 4 April, the European Commission sent Member States a recommendation on the reduction of the presence of cadmium in foodstuffs. The European executive body asks them to explain known mitigation methods to farmers and food business operators.

1. However, to the reader's surprise, the Commission's communication does not specify what these methods are, creating something of a grey area. Why were no details given?

2. Could the Commission undertake research and gather data on cadmium content? If this has already been done, what conclusions has the European authority reached?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The main goal of Recommendation 2014/193/EU ([1]) is collection of reliable data on cadmium content in major contributors to dietary cadmium exposure in view of a future reassessment of existing maximum levels for cadmium in food. Especially in food of plant origin, cadmium levels can be influenced by applying a wide range of mitigation measures. These measures are cited in the recitals of the recommendation: the choice of crops in view of the cadmium content of the soil and of the plant's pattern of cadmium accumulation, the addition of soil improvement agents and acidity regulators to the soil in an attempt to reduce the transfer from the soil to the crops, the choice of crops as well as the use of sewage sludge, manure, phosphate fertilisers, as these are known contributors to the cadmium content of the soil.

Data on cadmium content in food have been collected for many years and have been used by the European Food Safety Authority for the Scientific Opinion on Cadmium in Food ([2]). As this opinion demonstrated the need for a further reduction of dietary cadmium exposure, existing maximum levels for cadmium in food have been reviewed where possible ([3]). However, as an immediate reduction is not possible for a number of major contributors to dietary exposure, the recommendation was adopted to raise consciousness in concerned stakeholders.

([1]) Commission Recommendation 2014/193/EU on the reduction of the presence of cadmium in foodstuffs (OJ L 104, 8.4.2014, p. 80).
([2]) Scientific Opinion of the Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain on a request from the European Commission on cadmium in food. The EFSA Journal (2009) 980, 1-139.
([3]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 488/2014 of 12.5.2014 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels of cadmium in foodstuffs (OJ L 138, 13.5.2014, p. 75).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004521/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Abeille européenne

Une conférence de haut niveau se tenait le 7 avril 2014 à Bruxelles, à la Commission européenne, sur les dernières avancées en matière de santé des abeilles. À cette occasion ont été révélées les premières conclusions de l'étude «Epilobee», qui doit permettre un vaste état des lieux des colonies de pollinisateurs dans l'Union européenne.

Selon cette étude, menée dans 17 États membre de l'Union européenne, la mortalité des abeilles en Europe recouvre des différences régionales importantes. Les pays du nord de l'Europe sont plus touchés par la mortalité des abeilles (taux de mortalité des colonies de 33,6 % en hiver et de 13,6 % pendant la saison apicole) que ceux se trouvant dans le sud, près de la Méditerranée (3,5 % et 0,3 %).

Cette étude a été menée sur la base de prélèvements de données et de méthodes d'échantillonnage harmonisés, et elle a concerné plus de 31 832 colonies dans 17 États membres de l'Union. La collecte de données a eu lieu de l'automne 2012 à l'été 2013, précise le communiqué de la Commission européenne.

Quelles conclusions en tire la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2014)

Étant donné que les études de surveillance des pertes d'abeilles ([1]) réalisées pour la deuxième année en 2013/2014 ([2]) sont toujours en cours — sous la supervision des autorités vétérinaires des États membres participants —, la Commission n'en a pas encore tiré de conclusions finales, ni n'a pris de décision quant à d'éventuelles actions de suivi.

En ce qui concerne les conclusions préliminaires, prenant en compte le fait que les études précédentes n'ont pas été réalisées suivant une méthode harmonisée, la Commission considère que cette initiative a comblé un vide important dans la collecte de données représentatives, fiables et comparables à l'échelle de l'Union européenne, sans lesquelles il est impossible d'estimer l'ampleur de la mortalité des colonies. L'initiative a également beaucoup aidé les services vétérinaires des États membres à améliorer leur capacité d'effectuer de telles opérations de surveillance.

Cette méthode s'est avérée fiable et peut être appliquée et utilisée à l'avenir si nécessaire, elle peut s'adapter aux besoins spécifiques des travaux futurs, comme la recherche appliquée, l'élaboration d'orientations et la surveillance de routine, ou s'adapter au recoupement des données collectées avec les données d'autres sources. Elle a déjà permis la collecte de très nombreuses données, qui seront analysées une fois que les données de l'enquête 2013/2014 en cours seront disponibles.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/docs/bee-report_en.pdf (disponible en anglais uniquement).
([2]) Décision d'exécution de la Commission 2013/5012/UE, JO L 279 du 19 octobre 2013, p. 67.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004521/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: European honey-bee

A high-level conference was held on 7 April 2014 in Brussels, at the European Commission, on the latest advances in bee health. It was also the occasion for releasing the initial conclusions of the 'Epilobee' study, which will certainly facilitate a wide-ranging survey of pollinator colonies in the European Union.

According to this study, conducted in 17 European Union Member States, bee mortality in Europe presents significant regional variation. The countries of northern Europe are more affected by bee mortality than those in the south, around the Mediterranean. In the north, the mortality rates of colonies are 33.6% in winter and 13.6% during the beekeeping season. In the south, they are 3.5% and 0.3% respectively.

This study was conducted on the basis of data gathering and harmonised sampling methods. It covered over 31,832 colonies in 17 EU Member States. The data were collected from autumn 2012 to summer 2013, as the European Commission press release explained.

What conclusions does the Commission draw?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

As the surveillance studies on honeybee losses ([1]) for the second year in 2013/2014 ([2]) are still on-going, under the supervision of the veterinary authorities of the participating Member States, the Commission has not yet drawn final conclusions, nor has taken any decision on possible follow-up actions.

As regards preliminary conclusions, the Commission considers that this initiative filled an important gap in the gathering of representative, reliable and comparable data at EU level to estimate the extent of colony mortalities, taking into account that previous studies were not carried out following a harmonised methodology. It also assisted significantly the veterinary services in the Member States in improving their capacity to undertake such surveillance.

This methodology has proven to be robust and can be implemented and used further as necessary, adapted to specific needs as appropriate for further work such as applied research, policy development, routine surveillance or to cross-check with data from other sources. It has already resulted in collection of very substantial amount of data that will be further analysed once the data of the still on-going 2013/2014 survey will be available.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/docs/bee-report_en.pdf
([2]) Commission Implementing Decision 2013/5012/EU, OJ L 279 19.10.2013, p. 67.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004522/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Cimos

La Commission européenne a ouvert une enquête approfondie pour déterminer si une aide à la restructuration d'un montant de 35 millions d'euros en faveur du groupe Cimos, fabricant slovène de composants automobiles, était conforme aux règles de l'Union européenne sur les aides d'État. La Commission examinera en particulier si l'aide envisagée permettra à l'entreprise d'être viable sans le maintien de concours publics et si ses propriétaires contribueront suffisamment aux coûts de la restructuration. Par cette enquête, la Commission permet aux tiers intéressés de présenter leurs observations sur les mesures soumises à examen. Elle ne préjuge pas de l'issue de l'enquête.

Ces dernières années, Cimos a connu d'importantes difficultés financières résultant principalement de problèmes de liquidité associés à une dette bancaire très élevée dont l'entreprise était incapable d'assurer le service. Elle négocie actuellement un accord de restructuration de sa dette avec ses banques créancières. En juillet 2013, la Commission a autorisé à titre temporaire une aide au sauvetage de 35 millions d'euros sous la forme d'une garantie accordée à Cimos, sous réserve que la Slovénie s'engage à notifier un plan de restructuration susceptible de garantir la viabilité à long terme de l'entreprise.

En novembre 2013, la Slovénie a notifié le plan de restructuration, qui prend la forme d'une aide à la restructuration d'un montant de 35 millions d'euros en faveur de Cimos. Cette aide repose sur la conversion en actions de la créance que l'État détient sur la société, qui s'explique par l'aide au sauvetage accordée sous la forme d'une garantie. Selon les autorités slovènes, l'aide permettra de rétablir la viabilité à long terme de l'entreprise en renforçant ses liquidités et contribuera à la mise en œuvre de mesures de restructuration opérationnelles visant à réduire les coûts et à accroître la productivité.

1. Le plan de restructuration était-il conforme aux lignes directrices de l'Union de 2004 concernant les aides au sauvetage et à la restructuration?

2. Les propriétaires de l'entreprise contribuent-ils suffisamment aux coûts de restructuration?

3. Certains financements que la Slovénie présente comme des contributions de l'entreprise ne proviendraient-ils pas de ressources d'État et constituer des aides d'État supplémentaires?

4. Les prévisions relatives à la viabilité à long terme de l'entreprise sont-elles vraiment réalistes?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(2 juin 2014)

Après examen préliminaire, la Commission doute que le plan de restructuration de Cimos respecte les lignes directrices de l'UE concernant les aides d'État au sauvetage et à la restructuration d'entreprises en difficulté. Sa décision, qui porte la référence SA.37792 — programme de restructuration de Cimos d.d., a été publiée sur le site de la Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/252420/252420_1536109_7_2.pdf) et le sera bientôt au Journal officiel.

Les doutes exprimés concernent notamment les problèmes soulevés par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Après examen aprofondi de ces questions, la Commission communiquera sa position finale dans sa décision de clore la procédure formelle d'examen. À ce stade de l'examen, il est trop tôt pour donner des réponses définitives aux questions posées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004522/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Cimos

The European Commission has launched an in-depth inquiry to assess whether restructuring aid amounting to 35 million euros in favour of the Cimos group, a Slovenian manufacturer of automotive components, was compliant with EU rules on state aid. In particular, the Commission will examine whether the planned aid will enable the business to become viable without continued public support and whether its owners are making a sufficient contribution to the restructuring costs. The Commission's investigation gives interested third parties an opportunity to comment on the measures in question. It does not prejudge the final outcome.

In recent years, Cimos has experienced significant financial difficulties primarily related to liquidity issues associated with a very high level of bank debt that the business was unable to service. It is currently negotiating a debt restructuring agreement with its creditor banks. In July 2013, the Commission temporarily authorised a 35 million euro rescue aid guarantee granted to Cimos, subject to a commitment by Slovenia to put forward a restructuring plan capable of ensuring the long-term viability of the business.

In November 2013, Slovenia notified the Commission of the restructuring plan, which takes the form of restructuring aid amounting to 35 million euros in favour of Cimos. The aid is based on a debt-to-equity conversion of the State's claim against the company resulting from the rescue aid guarantee. According to the Slovenian authorities, the aid will restore the long-term viability of the business by improving its liquidity and help to implement operational restructuring measures designed to reduce costs and increase productivity.

1. Did the restructuring plan comply with the 2004 EU guidelines on rescue and restructuring aid?

2. Are the owners of the business making a sufficient contribution to the restructuring costs?

3. Could it be that some of the funding that Slovenia describes as the business's own contributions is actually coming from State resources and involves additional state aid?

4. Are the predictions concerning the long-term viability of the business genuinely realistic?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

Based on a preliminary examination, the Commission has doubts whether the restructuring plan of Cimos complies with the rescue and restructuring guidelines. This decision, SA.37792 Restructuring program of Cimos d.d., was published on the Commission website (http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/252420/252420_1536109_7_2.pdf) and will be published in the Official Journal soon.

The doubts expressed relate inter alia to the issues raised by the Honourable Member. The Commission will investigate these issues in-depth and will communicate its final position in the decision to close the formal investigation procedure. At this stage of the investigation it is too early to provide definitive answers to these questions.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004523/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: La Bulgarie et Gazprom

Les députés bulgares ont adopté en première lecture les amendements à la loi nationale sur l'énergie, qui devraient conférer le statut de gazoduc transfrontalier au tronçon bulgare, long de plus de 500 km, du gazoduc South Stream. Le projet russe devrait ainsi échapper aux exigences du troisième train de mesures de l'Union européenne sur l'énergie, en vertu duquel Gazprom ne peut gérer le gazoduc en toute indépendance, fixer les tarifs et transférer uniquement du gaz russe. De l'avis des experts, cette libéralisation grèvera davantage le projet de Gazprom, dont le coût, 16 milliards de dollars, n'est pas négligeable.

Les modifications apportées à la loi bulgare sur l'énergie ne sont-elles pas contraires aux normes en vigueur dans l'Union européenne?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(16 juin 2014)

Les amendements à la loi bulgare sur l'énergie ont été adoptés par le Parlement bulgare en première lecture et ne sont donc pas encore entrés en vigueur. Les services de la Commission estiment à titre préliminaire que les modifications proposées excluent de façon abusive et unilatérale les gazoducs offshore — dont toute partie se trouvant sur le territoire de l'UE relève de la juridiction de l'UE (qui est géographiquement limitée) — de dispositions importantes du troisième paquet «Énergie». Des contacts ont été établis, entre experts et au niveau politique, entre la Bulgarie et la Commission, afin de régler cette question.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004523/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Bulgaria and Gazprom

Bulgarian Members of Parliament have adopted the amendments to the national energy law on first reading. Those amendments seem likely to confer the status of cross-border pipeline on the Bulgarian section, over 500 km in length, of the South Stream pipeline. As such, the Russian project seems likely to circumvent the requirements of the third package of European Union measures on energy by virtue of the fact that Gazprom cannot manage the pipeline entirely independently, fix the prices or transport exclusively Russian gas. According to experts, the aforementioned liberalisation will further hamper the Gazprom project. The cost of that project, 16 billion dollars, is not inconsiderable.

Are the amendments to the Bulgarian energy law not contrary to the regulations in force in the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The amendments to the Bulgarian Energy Act were adopted by the Bulgarian Parliament in a first reading and as such they are not yet in force. The Commission services' preliminary view is that the proposed amendments incorrectly and unilaterally exclude off-shore pipelines — which are under EU jurisdiction for any part on EU territory (but this is geographically limited) — from key elements of the Third Package rules. Contacts both on political and expert level have been taken up between Bulgaria and the Commission in order to resolve the matter.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004524/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Google et bilan du commissaire

Après plus de trois ans d'enquête, le commissaire européen en charge de la concurrence, le Commissaire Almunia, a pris une décision provisoire dans l'affaire Google, après que la société américaine a présenté une nouvelle série d'engagements.

Google garantit que «lorsqu'elle promeut ses propres services de recherche spécialisés sur sa page web (par exemple pour des produits, des hôtels, des restaurants, etc.), les services de trois concurrents, sélectionnés au moyen d'une méthode objective, apparaissent de manière clairement visible pour les utilisateurs et selon une présentation comparable à celle utilisée pour ses propres services», selon le communiqué de la Commission.

Pourquoi en mars, lors de sa dernière audition devant le Parlement européen avant les élections, le commissaire n'a-t-il pas fait état du dossier Google dans les questions traitées lors de son mandat?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(26 juin 2014)

La Commission a conclu à titre préliminaire que les nouveaux engagements proposés par Google répondent de manière appropriée aux problèmes de concurrence qu'elle a relevés. Elle a donc rencontré récemment les plaignants et fera prochainement parvenir à chacun d'entre eux une évaluation provisoire détaillée exposant les raisons de son avis préliminaire. Les plaignants auront ensuite la possibilité de lui faire part de leurs observations concernant cette évaluation provisoire. La Commission analysera ces observations avant de prendre une décision finale sur la nécessité ou non de rendre juridiquement contraignants les engagements présentés par Google.

Quant à la raison pour laquelle le dossier Google ne figurait pas parmi ceux traités le 18 mars 2014, il ne s'agit que d'une question de circonstances. Le 11 mars 2014, la Commission avait participé à une réunion limitée à l'enquête sur Google, à laquelle pouvaient assister les membres de la commission ECON et tout autre membre du Parlement européen intéressé. Ainsi, compte tenu du débat approfondi sur Google de la semaine précédente, l'audition du 18 mars 2014 s'est concentrée sur l'évolution d'autres affaires et conduites en cours. Par ailleurs, en réponse à une question posée concernant Google à la suite de cette audition du 18 mars 2014, la Commission a indiqué qu'elle espérait que cette affaire soit clôturée avant la fin de son mandat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004524/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Google and the Commissioner's report

After an investigation lasting more than three years, the European Commissioner for Competition, Mr Almunia, has provisionally ruled on the Google case, after the American company pledged a new series of commitments.

Google guarantees that 'when it promotes its own services from specialised searches on its website (for example for products, hotels, restaurants, and so on), it will display the services of three competitors, selected objectively, in a manner that is clearly visible to users and a layout comparable to that used for its own services.'

Why then in March, at his last appearance before the European Parliament prior to elections, did the Commissioner not include the Google case in the issues covered during his mandate?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

The Commission has come to the preliminary view that Google's latest commitments proposal adequately addresses the competition concerns identified by the Commission. As a result, the Commission has recently met with the complainants and is in the process of sending to each complainant a detailed provisional assessment, setting forth the reasons why it is of this preliminary view. Complainants will then have the opportunity to inform the Commission of their views on the provisional assessment. The Commission will analyse the comments before taking any final decision on whether to make Google's commitments legally binding.

As to the question of why the Google case was not included in the list of issues on 18 March 2014, it is simply a matter of context. On 11 March 2014, the Commission had intervened in a restricted meeting on the Google investigation in which ECON members and any other interested MEP could participate. Hence, in view of the detailed Google discussion session held one week earlier, the address of 18 March 2014 focused on other cases and policy developments. Further, in response to a question on Google after this address of 18 March 2014, the Commission indicated that it hoped the Google case could be finalised before the end of its mandate.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004525/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Mauvais accord Google

Après plus de trois ans d'enquête, le commissaire européen en charge de la concurrence, Joaquín Almunia, a pris une décision provisoire dans l'affaire Google, après que la société américaine a présenté une nouvelle série d'engagements.

Google garantit que «lorsqu'elle promeut ses propres services de recherche spécialisés sur sa page web (par exemple pour des produits, des hôtels, des restaurants, etc.), les services de trois concurrents, sélectionnés au moyen d'une méthode objective, apparaissent de manière clairement visible pour les utilisateurs et selon une présentation comparable à celle utilisée pour ses propres services», selon le communiqué du commissaire.

Joaquín Almunia a indiqué que les nouveaux engagements «répondaient aux préoccupations de la Commission» et qu'ils ouvraient la voie à un règlement définitif de l'affaire avec le géant américain dont les deux dernières propositions ont été rejetées.

Lors d'un débat interne à la suite de la décision provisoire, les commissaires ont demandé s'il existait une marge de manœuvre en vue «de garantir que Google améliore les engagements annoncés», selon le procès-verbal de la réunion.

Certains des commissaires, dont Michel Barnier chargé du marché intérieur et Günther Oettinger chargé de l'énergie, ont exprimé leurs inquiétudes sur le dossier. Au total, neuf commissaires ont exprimé leurs doutes quant à l'accord provisoire.

Même dans la direction générale en charge des activités antitrust, des divergences se font également ressentir.

Il est évident que l'accord passé avec Google ne satisfait personne hormis Google. La Commission compte-t-elle rectifier le tir?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(16 juin 2014)

La Commission est parvenue à la conclusion préliminaire que la troisième proposition d'engagements présentée par Google répond de manière adéquate aux préoccupations en matière de concurrence soulignées dans son évaluation préliminaire du 13 mars 2013.

Cette conclusion préliminaire est fondée sur une enquête qui a été menée de manière approfondie.

Le collège des commissaires a été tenu pleinement informé tout au long de l'enquête.

Le procès-verbal de la réunion du collège à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire semble faire référence mentionne un «*soutien global à la ligne de conduite présentée par le commissaire responsable dans ce dossier politiquement, économiquement et médiatiquement très sensible*». Le Président a clôturé «*l'échange de vues approfondi et fructueux*» au sujet de cette affaire en faisant observer que «*la procédure et la préparation de la décision finale de la Commission vont suivre leur cours dans le sens indiqué et conformément aux règles en vigueur*» ([1]).

Conformément à l'article 7 du règlement 773/2004 de la Commission, tous les plaignants seront informés des raisons pour lesquelles la Commission estime, à titre préliminaire, que la troisième proposition de Google répond de manière adéquate aux préoccupations en matière de concurrence. Ils recevront une version non confidentielle de la troisième proposition d'engagements présentée par Google et auront la possibilité de faire connaître à la Commission leur point de vue.

La Commission analysera les observations avant de prendre une décision finale sur l'opportunité de rendre juridiquement contraignante, conformément à l'article 9 du règlement 1/2003, la troisième proposition d'engagements présentée par Google.

Toute décision finale sera prise par le collège des commissaires.

([1]) PV(2014) 2075 final — PROCÈS-VERBAL de la deux mille septante-cinquième réunion de la Commission tenue à Bruxelles (Berlaymont) le 12 février 2014 (matin).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004525/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Flawed agreement with Google

Following an investigation lasting more than three years, Joaquín Almunia, the EU Commissioner with responsibility for competition, has taken a provisional decision in the Google case after the US company gave a series of new undertakings.

The Commissioner stated in a press release that Google will now guarantee that 'whenever it promotes its own specialised search services on its web page (e.g. for products, hotels, restaurants, etc.), the services of three rivals, selected through an objective method, will also be displayed in a way that is clearly visible to users and comparable to the way in which Google displays its own services'.

He suggested that the new undertakings 'addressed the Commission's concerns' and would offer a way to settle the dispute with the US giant, whose two previous proposals were rejected.

According to the minutes of a meeting held after the provisional decision had been announced, the Commissioners wondered if there was not some scope to persuade Google to make further concessions.

Several Commissioners, including Michel Barnier (Commissioner for the internal market) and Günther Oettinger (Commissioner for Energy), expressed concern at the proposed measures. In total, nine voiced doubts about the provisional agreement.

There is no consensus on the issue even in the directorate-general with responsibility for anti-trust measures.

Given that the agreement concluded with Google clearly pleases nobody but Google itself, does the Commission intend to renegotiate it?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The Commission has reached the preliminary conclusion that Google's third commitments proposal addresses adequately the competition concerns outlined in the Commission's preliminary assessment of 13 March 2013.

This preliminary conclusion has been reached based on the in-depth investigation that has been carried out.

The College of Commissioners has been kept fully informed throughout the investigation.

The minutes of the College meeting to which the Honourable Member seems to refer record an 'overall support for the line set out by the Commissioner in charge of this politically and economically sensitive case that was attracting a lot of media coverage'. The President closed the 'in-depth and fruitful discussion' on this case remarking that 'the procedure and preparations for the Commission's final decision would continue along the lines indicated and in accordance with the rules in force.' ([1])

Pursuant to Article 7 of Commission Regulation 773/2004, all complainants are in the process of being informed of the reasons why the Commission is of the preliminary view that Google's third proposal addresses adequately its competition concerns. They will receive a non-confidential version of Google's third commitments proposal and will have the opportunity to inform the Commission of their views.

The Commission will analyse the comments before taking any final decision on whether to make Google's third commitments proposal legally binding pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003.

Any final decision will be taken by the College of Commissioners.

([1]) PV(2014) 2075 final — Minutes of the 2075th meeting of the Commission held in Brussels (Berlaymont) on Wednesday 12 February 2014 (morning).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004526/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Protection des données: décision de la Cour de justice

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne a invalidé le 8 avril 2014 la directive européenne 2006/24/CE imposant la conservation des données d'identification sur les réseaux de communications électroniques. Les États membres — dont la France — vont devoir repenser en profondeur leurs législations sur la surveillance des réseaux.

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) a invalidé le 8 avril la directive européenne 2006/24/CE sur la conservation des données de connexion et d'utilisation des réseaux de communications électroniques.

La Cour de Luxembourg estime que ce texte n'apporte pas de garanties effectives de protection des libertés individuelles. Elle définit les conditions qui ont manqué à cette directive pour être conforme à la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. Or ces conditions ne sont pas réunies par de nombreuses lois nationales traitant de la prévention du terrorisme et de la répression du crime organisé.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Quand va-t-elle faire une déclaration?

3. Quel est le calendrier pour une réécriture ou une modification de cette directive? Quel est d'ailleurs le choix de la Commission à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(16 juin 2014)

Les aspects abordés par la Cour sont très complexes et leurs conséquences doivent être évaluées en profondeur. Cette évaluation sera menée en concertation avec l'ensemble des parties intéressées, et de manière à tenir compte des tous les intérêts légitimes concernés. La Commission entend prendre le temps nécessaire pour ce faire. Sur cette base, elle sera en mesure de déterminer, dans les mois à venir, si une nouvelle proposition législative est nécessaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004526/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Data protection: decision of the Court of Justice

On 8 April 2014, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC, requiring the retention of identification data on electronic communications networks, was invalid. Member States — including France — will therefore now have to substantially rethink their laws in relation to network surveillance.

On 8 April 2014, the CJEU declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC on the retention of log-in details and usage data for electronic communications networks was invalid.

The Court of Justice in Luxembourg considers that the provisions of this directive do not offer sufficient guarantees to effectively protect personal freedoms and it outlines the conditions that the directive lacks in order to comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. However, these conditions are not met by a number of national anti-terrorism laws and laws relating to the prevention of organised crime.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to this decision?

2. When will the Commission issue a statement on this matter?

3. Will the Commission elect to rewrite or to amend the directive, and what is the envisaged timetable for doing so?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The issues raised by the Court are very complex and require a thorough assessment of their impacts. This assessment will be carried out in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner to take on board all legitimate interests involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation. On that basis, the Commission will be able to evaluate in the coming months whether there is a need for a new legislative proposal.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004527/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Protection des données: CJUE et Safe Harbor

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne a invalidé le 8 avril 2014 la directive européenne 2006/24/CE imposant la conservation des données d'identification sur les réseaux de communications électroniques. Les États membres — dont la France — vont devoir repenser en profondeur leurs législations sur la surveillance des réseaux.

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) a invalidé le 8 avril la directive européenne 2006/24/CE sur la conservation des données de connexion et d'utilisation des réseaux de communications électroniques.

La Cour de Luxembourg estime que ce texte n'apporte pas de garanties effectives de protection des libertés individuelles. Elle définit les conditions qui ont manqué à cette directive pour être conforme à la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. Or ces conditions ne sont pas réunies par de nombreuses lois nationales traitant de la prévention du terrorisme et de la répression du crime organisé.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle notre avis selon lequel cette décision devrait avoir des conséquences pour le traité Safe Harbor?

2. Quelle est sa position et son argumentation en faveur ou en défaveur de celle-ci?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Malmström au nom de la Commission
(20 juin 2014)

1. L'arrêt rendu par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) dans les affaires jointes C-293/12 et C-594/12 porte sur la directive relative à la conservation des données (directive 2006/24/CE), aujourd'hui invalidée.

La Commission note que, contrairement à la directive sur la conservation des données, l'accord sur la sphère de sécurité vise essentiellement à réglementer le transfert, par des sociétés, de données à caractère personnel entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis à des fins commerciales. La Commission rappelle que, dans ses communications sur le rétablissement de la confiance dans les flux de données entre l'Union européenne et les États-Unis ([1]) et sur le fonctionnement de la sphère de sécurité ([2]), elle a adressé plusieurs recommandations aux autorités américaines visant à renforcer le système de sphère de sécurité et à améliorer la protection des données, afin de continuer à garantir la libre circulation des données à caractère personnel entre les entreprises européennes et américaines respectant les règles de la sphère de sécurité. Des discussions sont en cours, dont les conclusions serviront de base à l'évaluation par la Commission de l'accord relatif à la sphère de sécurité.

2. L'impact des questions soulevées par la Cour devra faire l'objet d'une évaluation approfondie. La Commission procédera à cette évaluation en concertation avec l'ensemble des parties intéressées, et de manière à traiter et prendre en compte tous les intérêts légitimes et problèmes soulevés. Elle entend prendre le temps nécessaire pour mener à bien ce processus.

([1]) COM(2013) 846.
([2]) COM(2013) 847.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004527/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Data protection: CJEU and Safe Harbour

On 8 April 2014, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC, requiring the retention of identification data on electronic communications networks, was invalid. Member States — including France — will therefore now have to substantially rethink their laws in relation to network surveillance.

On 8 April 2014, the CJEU declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC on the retention of log-in details and usage data for electronic communications networks was invalid.

The Court of Justice in Luxembourg considers that the provisions of this directive do not offer sufficient guarantees to effectively protect personal freedoms and it outlines the conditions that the directive lacks in order to comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. However, these conditions are not met by a number of national anti-terrorism laws and laws relating to the prevention of organised crime.

1. Does the Commission share our opinion that this decision will have a knock-on effect on the Safe Harbour agreement?

2. What stance is the Commission taking and what are its arguments for and against this decision?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

1. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) judgment in Joined Cases C-293/12 and C-594/12 concerns the now-invalidated Data Retention Directive (Directive 2006/24/EC).

The Commission notes that, contrary to the Data Retention Directive, the primary purpose of the Safe Harbour arrangement is to regulate the transfer by companies of personal data between the EU and the US for commercial purposes. The Commission recalls that in its communications on Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows ([1]) and on the Functioning of the Safe Harbour ([2]), the Commission made several recommendations to the US to reinforce the Safe Harbour scheme and improve data protection to continue to allow for the free flow of personal data between the EU and companies in the US adhering to Safe Harbour. Discussions are on-going and the Commission will assess the Safe Harbour arrangement on the basis of the outcome of these discussions.

2. The issues raised by the Court require a thorough assessment of their impacts. The Commission will carry out this assessment in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner that will address and take on board all legitimate interests and concerns involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation.

([1]) COM(2013) 846.
([2]) COM(2013) 847.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004528/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Protection des données: CJUE et SWIFT

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne a invalidé le 8 avril 2014 la directive européenne 2006/24/CE imposant la conservation des données d'identification sur les réseaux de communications électroniques. Les États membres — dont la France — vont devoir repenser en profondeur leurs législations sur la surveillance des réseaux.

La Cour de Justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) a invalidé le 8 avril la directive européenne 2006/24/CE sur la conservation des données de connexion et d'utilisation des réseaux de communications électroniques.

La Cour de Luxembourg estime que ce texte n'apporte pas de garanties effectives de protection des libertés individuelles. Elle définit les conditions qui ont manqué à cette directive pour être conforme à la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne. Or ces conditions ne sont pas réunies par de nombreuses lois nationales traitant de la prévention du terrorisme et de la répression du crime organisé.

1. La Commission partage-t-elle notre avis selon lequel cette décision devrait avoir des conséquences sur SWIFT?

2. Quelle est sa position et son argumentation en faveur ou en défaveur de celle-ci?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(18 juin 2014)

1. L'arrêt rendu par la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne (CJUE) dans les affaires jointes C-293/12 et C-594/12 au sujet de la directive 2006/24/CE (directive sur la conservation des données) n'a aucun effet direct sur les autres instruments juridiques de l'UE car il analyse la directive en question en lien avec les types de données relatives aux télécommunications relevant de cette directive.

La Commission note que l'accord UE–États-Unis sur le programme de surveillance du financement du terrorisme (TFTP) est lui-même limité en termes d'objet et de champ d'application, fixe des règles strictes et explicites en ce qui concerne l'accès aux données à caractère personnel et leur traitement et met en place des dispositifs de sécurité efficaces.

2. Les problèmes soulevés par la Cour nécessitent une évaluation approfondie de leurs possibles conséquences. La Commission réalisera cette évaluation en concertation avec toutes les parties concernées et d'une manière qui traitera et prendra en considération tous les intérêts légitimes et les problèmes qui se posent. La Commission entend prendre le temps nécessaire à la réalisation de cette évaluation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004528/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Data protection: CJEU and SWIFT

On 8 April 2014, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC, requiring the retention of identification data on electronic communications networks, was invalid. Member States — including France — will therefore now have to substantially rethink their laws in relation to network surveillance.

On 8 April 2014, the CJEU declared that European Directive 2006/24/EC on the retention of log-in details and usage data for electronic communications networks was invalid.

The Court of Justice in Luxembourg considers that the provisions of this directive do not offer sufficient guarantees to effectively protect personal freedoms and it outlines the conditions that the directive lacks in order to comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. However, these conditions are not met by a number of national anti-terrorism laws and laws relating to the prevention of organised crime.

1. Does the Commission share our opinion that this decision will have a knock-on effect on the SWIFT agreement?

2. What stance is the Commission taking and what are its arguments for and against this decision?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

1. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) judgment in Joined Cases C-293/12 and C-594/12 on Directive 2006/24/EC (the Data retention Directive) has no direct effect on other EU legal instruments as it analyses the directive in question in relation to the types of telecommunications data covered under that directive.

The Commission notes that the EU-US TFTP Agreement itself is limited in purpose and scope, sets out clear and strict rules for the access to and processing of personal data and provides effective safeguards.

2. The issues raised by the Court require a thorough assessment of their possible impacts. The Commission will carry out such an assessment in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner that will address and take on board all legitimate interests and concerns involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004529/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Politique d'immigration en Bulgarie

Le 1er avril, le Haut Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés (HCR) a rappelé qu'il avait demandé, au mois de janvier 2014, la suspension de tous les renvois de demandeurs d'asile vers la Bulgarie. Il a pointé du doigt les conditions déplorables dans les structures d'accueil et le traitement réservé globalement aux réfugiés.

Lors d'un séjour en Bulgarie au mois de mars, Amnesty International a constaté que, malgré certaines avancées, les conditions de vie dans certains centres d'accueil demeuraient inadaptées.

Des milliers d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfants, majoritairement originaires de Syrie, sont entrés en Bulgarie par la frontière turque au cours du dernier trimestre 2013. Depuis lors, leur nombre a fortement diminué puisque la Bulgarie a quasiment fermé ses frontières et déployé environ 1 500 policiers supplémentaires dans le secteur.

Les autorités bulgares affirment qu'au cours des derniers mois, l'Agence nationale pour les réfugiés a augmenté ses capacités et peut désormais traiter plus rapidement les demandes d'asile et les enregistrements.

Amnesty International pense cependant que cette avancée est, en partie, due au fait que le nombre de demandeurs a fortement diminué depuis la fermeture des frontières.

La Commission a-t-elle prise des mesures pour que la Bulgarie puisse améliorer ses conditions d'accueil épouvantables et remédier aux déficiences de la procédure d'asile?

Réponse donnée par Mme Malmström au nom de la Commission
(21 mai 2014)

La Commission, en collaboration avec le Bureau européen d'appui en matière d'asile (EASO), continue d'assurer un suivi attentif de la situation sur le terrain. Elle a ainsi examiné, avec la Bulgarie, un certain nombre de questions spécifiques concernant la procédure d'asile nationale. En collaboration avec les autorités bulgares, la Commission a recensé les mesures qui pourraient être prises pour améliorer la situation des demandeurs d'asile et des réfugiés.

La Commission a fourni une aide d'urgence de 8 millions d'euros à la Bulgarie à titre de soutien. Ce financement a principalement été alloué à l'augmentation et à l'amélioration de la capacité d'accueil et d'hébergement des demandeurs d'asile (par exemple, moyennant des travaux de rénovation et de remise en état des centres d'accueil, la fourniture de services de base tels que la nourriture ou les soins médicaux) et a servi à accroître la capacité des autorités bulgares à enregistrer et à traiter les demandes d'asile de façon plus efficace. Dans un rapport récent sur la situation en Bulgarie, le Haut Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés a reconnu que cette aide a contribué de manière significative à améliorer la situation. La Commission reste déterminée à soutenir, si nécessaire, la Bulgarie ou tout autre État membre dont le système d'asile pourrait être sous pression.

En outre, l'EASO a signé avec la Bulgarie un plan opérationnel permettant le déploiement d'experts détachés par d'autres États membres afin de soutenir les autorités bulgares sur le terrain. Les équipes d'experts seront opérationnelles jusqu'en septembre 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004529/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Politica dell'immigrazione in Bulgaria

Il 1º aprile l'Alto commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i rifugiati (UNHCR) ha ribadito la richiesta, avanzata nel mese di gennaio 2014, relativa alla sospensione di tutti i trasferimenti in Bulgaria di richiedenti asilo. L'Alto commissariato ha puntato il dito contro le deplorevoli condizioni in cui versano le strutture di accoglienza e, in generale, contro il trattamento riservato ai rifugiati.

In occasione di un soggiorno in Bulgaria nel mese di marzo *Amnesty International* ha constatato che, nonostante i progressi, le condizioni di vita in alcuni centri di accoglienza rimanevano inadeguate.

Nel corso dell'ultimo trimestre del 2013 migliaia di uomini, donne e bambini, in prevalenza di origine siriana, sono entrate in Bulgaria attraversando la frontiera con la Turchia. Da allora il loro numero è fortemente diminuito in quanto la Bulgaria ha praticamente chiuso le frontiere schierando altresì circa 1 500 agenti di polizia in più nelle aree in questione.

Le autorità bulgare affermano che, nel corso degli ultimi mesi, l'Agenzia nazionale per i rifugiati è stata potenziata ed è ora in grado di trattare più rapidamente le domande di asilo e le registrazioni.

Amnesty International ritiene tuttavia che tale progresso sia in parte imputabile al forte calo del numero di richiedenti in seguito alla chiusura delle frontiere.

Ha la Commissione adottato provvedimenti che consentano alla Bulgaria di migliorare le sue terribili condizioni di accoglienza e di porre rimedio alle carenze della procedura di asilo?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2014)

La Commissione, insieme all'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo (EASO), ha seguito e segue tuttora con attenzione la situazione a livello locale. La Commissione ha inoltre espresso alla Bulgaria una serie di preoccupazioni specifiche relative alla procedura di asilo nel paese e, insieme alle autorità bulgare, ha individuato le misure che potrebbero essere adottate per migliorare la situazione dei richiedenti asilo e dei rifugiati.

Per sostenere la Bulgaria, la Commissione ha fornito circa 8 milioni di EUR in finanziamenti di emergenza, che sono stati utilizzati principalmente al fine di accrescere e migliorare le capacità di accoglienza e di alloggio per i richiedenti asilo (ad esempio, ristrutturando e rinnovando i centri di accoglienza e fornendo servizi basilari come il vitto o le cure mediche), nonché per aumentare la capacità delle autorità bulgare di registrare e trattare efficacemente le domande di asilo. In una recente relazione sulla Bulgaria, l'Alto commissariato delle Nazioni Unite per i rifugiati ha riconosciuto che questo sostegno aveva migliorato in misura significativa la situazione. La Commissione rimane disponibile ad aiutare, in caso di necessità, la Bulgaria e qualsiasi altro Stato membro i cui sistemi di asilo siano sotto pressione.

Inoltre, l'EASO ha sottoscritto con la Bulgaria un piano operativo che consente di inviare esperti distaccati da altri Stati membri per assistere le autorità bulgare in loco. Il gruppo di esperti rimarrà operativo fino al settembre 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004529/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Immigration policy in Bulgaria

On 1 April, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) restated the request it made in January 2014 to suspend all transfers of asylum-seekers to Bulgaria, highlighting the deplorable conditions of reception facilities and the way that refugees are generally treated.

During a visit to Bulgaria in March, Amnesty International stated that despite the progress made to a certain extent, living conditions in certain reception centres remain inadequate.

Thousands of men, women and children have entered Bulgaria, largely from Syria, via the Turkish border in the last three months of 2013. Since then, their numbers have decreased sharply as Bulgaria has practically closed its borders and deployed an additional 1 500 police officers in the area.

Bulgarian authorities maintain that throughout these months the State Agency for Refugees has increased its capacities and can now process asylum requests and registrations more quickly.

However, Amnesty International thinks that this progress is partly due to the fact that the number of applicants has greatly decreased since the borders were closed.

Has the Commission taken any steps to ensure Bulgaria is able to improve the horrendous reception conditions and address the deficiencies in its asylum procedure?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2014)

The Commission, together with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), has been and still is closely following the situation on the ground. The Commission has also raised with Bulgaria a number of specific concerns regarding its asylum procedure. Together with the Bulgarian authorities it has identified the measures that could be taken in order to improve the situation of asylum-seekers and refugees.

The Commission has provided some EUR 8 million in emergency funding to Bulgaria to support the country. This funding has been used mainly to increase and improve reception and accommodation capacity for asylum-seekers (e.g. renovation and refurbishing of reception centres, provision of basic services such as food or medical care) and to increase the capacity of the Bulgarian authorities to register and process requests for asylum more efficiently. In a recent report on the situation in Bulgaria, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees acknowledged that this support has had a significant impact on the improvement of the situation. The Commission remains committed to supporting Bulgaria or any other Member State whose asylum system might be under pressure, if necessary.

In addition, EASO has signed an Operational Plan with Bulgaria, allowing for the deployment of experts seconded by other Member States to support the Bulgarian authorities on the ground. The teams of experts will remain operational until September 2014.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004530/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Crimes de guerre au Nigeria

Selon Amnesty International, les insurgés islamistes de Boko Haram et l'armée nigériane auraient commis des crimes de guerre et des crimes contre l'humanité dans le nord du Nigeria, à majorité musulmane, où la crise est devenue un «conflit armé». L'ONG estime que plus de 1 500 personnes, des civils dans plus de la moitié des cas, ont été tuées depuis le début de l'année 2014 dans une recrudescence des violences dans le nord-est du pays, épicentre de la crise.

En proie depuis 2009 à une insurrection du groupe islamiste Boko Haram, le nord-est du Nigeria connaît, depuis le début de l'année, des violences sans précédent. Les assassinats, destructions d'écoles, attaques de villages sont devenus quasi quotidiens et auraient entraîné la mort de plus de 1 000 personnes et le déplacement de 250 000 autres depuis le début de l'année, d'après un recensement de l'agence de secours d'urgence nigériane NEMA du 25 mars dernier.

La région assiste à cette flambée de violence depuis l'instauration de l'état d'urgence en mai 2013 dans trois États du nord-est du Nigeria (Yobe, Adamawa et Borno). À force d'exactions, l'armée s'est mis à dos la population: de nombreux habitants refusent de dénoncer les membres de Boko Haram, certains ont même rejoint ses rangs.

Au vu de la feuille de route UE-Nigeria adoptée en juin 2009, qui met l'accent sur les enjeux du dialogue politique, de la gouvernance, de l'énergie et enfin de la paix et de la sécurité, comment la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante envisage-t-elle cette situation de crise, voire ce conflit armé, et quelles solutions pourraient être apportées?

Comment l'Union européenne pourrait-elle donner son soutien plein et véritable au Nigeria afin de mettre un terme à ces actes de violence visant des civils?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, M^me^ Ashton au nom de la Commission
(26 mai 2014)

La violence qui continue de sévir dans le nord-est du Nigeria constitue effectivement une source de vive inquiétude.

L'UE s'efforce d'aider les autorités nigérianes à mettre un terme au cycle de la violence. Elle s'y emploie au moyen de nombreuses actions, parmi lesquelles un dialogue politique permanent et des mesures d'aide ciblées, axées sur les causes profondes de la violence.

Dans notre dialogue au titre de «l'action conjointe UE-Nigeria pour le futur» («Joint Way Forward») évoquée par l'Honorable Parlementaire, nous insistons sur la nécessité, pour le Nigeria, de recourir à une approche globale pour relever les défis actuels en matière de sécurité, afin d'éviter et de prévenir tout sentiment d'aliénation. Cette approche globale devrait reposer sur des réformes socio-économiques, la création d'emplois et la prestation de services, une bonne gouvernance et l'État de droit.

Le dixième Fonds européen de développement soutient un large éventail d'actions dans le domaine de la démocratisation, de l'État de droit, de l'eau, de l'assainissement et de la santé maternelle. L'instrument de stabilité soutient plusieurs programmes et projets en faveur de la paix et de la médiation, qui contribuent à la sécurité ainsi qu'à la réforme du système de justice pénale. L'instrument européen pour la démocratie et les Droits de l'homme finance des actions visant à protéger les Droits de l'homme, avec la participation d'ONG, en particulier. Le 11^e^ FED, en cours de programmation, met fortement l'accent sur le nord-est.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004530/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Crimini di guerra in Nigeria

Secondo Amnesty International gli insorti islamisti di Boko Haram e l'esercito nigeriano avrebbero commesso dei crimini di guerra e dei crimini contro l'umanità nella parte settentrionale della Nigeria, a maggioranza musulmana, dove la crisi è sfociata in un conflitto armato. L'ONG ritiene che oltre 1 500 persone, civili per più della metà dei casi, sono state uccise dall'inizio del 2014 a causa della recrudescenza delle violenze nel nord-est del paese, epicentro della crisi.

In preda dal 2009 a un'insurrezione del gruppo islamista Boko Haram, la Nigeria nordorientale è confrontata dall'inizio dell'anno a una serie di violenze senza precedenti. Omicidi, distruzione di scuole, attacchi ai villaggi avvengono ormai ogni giorno e avrebbero causato la morte di oltre 1 000 persone e l'esodo di 250 000 sfollati dall'inizio dell'anno, secondo i rilevamenti dell'agenzia di soccorso d'urgenza nigeriana NEMA del 25 marzo 2014.

La regione assiste a questa esplosione di violenza dal maggio 2013, quando è stato instaurato lo stato di emergenza nei tre Stati della Nigeria nordorientale (Yobe, Adamawa e Borno). A causa dei continui soprusi, l'esercito si è alienato la popolazione e molti abitanti rifiutano di denunciare i membri di Boko Haram e alcuni si sono uniti a loro.

Tenuto conto della tabella di marcia UE-Nigeria adottata nel giugno 2009, che pone l'accento sulle sfide del dialogo politico, della governance, dell'energia nonchè della pace e della sicurezza, come valuta l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente questa situazione di crisi, ovvero questo conflitto armato, e quali soluzioni potrebbero essere apportate?

In che modo l'Unione europea potrebbe fornire il suo pieno sostegno alla Nigeria per porre fine a questi atti di violenza contro i civili?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 maggio 2014)

Le ripetute violenze nella Nigeria nord-orientale destano effettivamente grande preoccupazione.

L'UE collabora con le autorità nigeriane per contribuire a porre fine alla spirale di violenza, agendo su numerosi fronti tra cui un dialogo politico costante e aiuti mirati volti ad eliminare le cause profonde della violenza.

Durante il dialogo nel contesto dell'azione congiunta Nigeria-UE per il futuro a cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato, viene ribadita la necessità per la Nigeria di affrontare i problemi di sicurezza attuali secondo un approccio globale, in modo da evitare e prevenire l'alienazione. Tale approccio deve comprendere riforme socioeconomiche, la creazione di posti di lavoro e l'erogazione di servizi, il buon governo e lo Stato di diritto.

Il 10° FES sostiene interventi a livello di democratizzazione, Stato di diritto, risorse idriche, impianti igienico-sanitari e salute materna. Lo strumento per la stabilità sostiene numerosi programmi e progetti di pacificazione e mediazione che contribuiscono a migliorare la sicurezza e a riformare la giustizia penale. Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani finanzia azioni a tutela dei diritti umani, in particolare con le ONG. L'11° FES è attualmente in fase di programmazione, con un forte accento sulla regione nord-orientale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004530/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — War crimes in Nigeria

According to Amnesty International, Islamist insurgents from Boko Haram and the Nigerian Army have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Muslim-majority north of Nigeria, where the crisis has turned into an 'armed conflict'. The NGO believes that more than 1 500 people, the majority of whom were civilians, have been killed since the start of 2014 in the resurgence of violence in the north-east of the country — the epicentre of the crisis.

The north-east of Nigeria has been suffering from insurrections by the Islamist group Boko Haram since 2009, but has seen an unprecedented level of violence since the start of this year. Murders, destruction of schools and attacks on villages have become almost a daily occurrence and have reportedly caused the deaths of more than 1 000 people and displaced 250 000 people since the beginning of the year, according to a census carried out by the Nigerian National Emergency Management Agency on 25 March.

The region has endured this outbreak of violence since a state of emergency was declared in three states in the north-east of Nigeria (Yobe, Adamawa and Borno) in May 2013. Through its acts of violence, the army has alienated the population, with numerous people refusing to condemn members of Boko Haram and some people even joining its ranks.

In view of the Nigeria-EU Joint Way Forward adopted in June 2009, which emphasises the importance of political dialogue, governance, energy and finally peace and security, how does the Vice-President/High Representative view this crisis situation, or armed conflict, and what solutions could it suggest?

How could the European Union provide its full and genuine support to Nigeria in order to bring an end to these acts of violence that target civilians?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The continued violence in the North East of Nigeria is indeed of great concern.

The EU is working with the Nigerian authorities to help bring an end to the cycle of violence. It does so through many actions including continuous political dialogue and targeted aid interventions focusing on the underlying root causes of violence.

In our dialogue under the EU-Nigeria Joint Way Forward referred to by the Honourable Member of Parliament, we emphasise the need for Nigeria to address the current security challenges with a comprehensive approach to avoid and prevent alienation. Such a comprehensive approach should include socioeconomic reforms, job creation and provision of services, good governance and the rule of law.

The 10th European Development Funds is supporting a broad range of actions in the field of democratisation, rule of law, water, sanitation and maternal health. The Instrument for Stability is supporting several peace and mediation programmes and projects contributing to security and the reform of the criminal justice system. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights funds actions to protect human rights, particularly with NGOs. The 11th EDF is currently being programmed, with a strong focus on the North East.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004531/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Droits de l'homme au Sri Lanka

Depuis la fin du conflit avec les Tigres libérateurs de l'Eelam tamoul (LTTE), en mai 2009, le gouvernement du président Mahinda Rajapakse poursuit la répression contre ses détracteurs. En effet, Ruki Fernando, de l'association INFORM, basée à Colombo, et le père Praveen Mahesan, prêtre catholique, ont été arrêtés à Kilinochchi le 16 mars et auraient été détenus sans être officiellement accusés, au titre de la très draconienne loi relative à la prévention du terrorisme (PTA).

Si leur libération hâtive après deux jours de placement en détention est une mesure positive, d'autres militants pacifiques ont été arrêtés ces derniers mois dans le but d'éradiquer la dissidence.

L'arrestation et la détention arbitraire d'éminents défenseurs des Droits de l'homme auraient pour but de réduire au silence les détracteurs et de détourner l'attention des violations commises au respect des Droits de l'homme.

Dans son rapport intitulé *Authority without Accountability: The Crisis of Impunity in Sri Lanka*, la commission internationale de juristes révèle que les dispositions de la PTA se traduisent par des détentions arbitraires, vont à l'encontre du droit des suspects à un procès équitable et à une procédure régulière et favorisent la torture, les mauvais traitements et les disparitions forcées.

Par ailleurs, Amnesty International a reçu des informations très inquiétantes selon lesquelles les services de renseignement sri-lankais ont mis sur pied une unité spéciale chargée de surveiller les personnes soupçonnées de transmettre des informations à l'ONU.

Malgré deux précédentes résolutions du Conseil des Droits de l'homme, en 2012 et 2013, le Sri Lanka n'a pris aucune disposition mesurable visant à rendre justice aux victimes de la guerre civile, mais a lancé une campagne agressive contre ceux qui réclament que les responsables rendent des comptes pour leurs actes. Les défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, les militants, les journalistes et les membres de la société civile qui critiquent le gouvernement sont régulièrement menacés et harcelés. Ceux qui sont connus au niveau international sont particulièrement visés.

1. Quelles sont les possibilités d'intervention de l'Union européenne afin de mettre fin à ce régime de répression et d'outrage aux droits humains?

2. Comment l'Union européenne pourrait-elle faire pression sur le gouvernement sri-lankais afin que celui-ci respecte ses engagements internationaux?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2014)

L'UE demeure préoccupée par la situation des Droits de l'homme au Sri Lanka. Les rapports mettent en évidence un accroissement des situations de harcèlement infligées aux défenseurs des Droits de l'homme ces derniers mois, en particulier dans le nord du pays.

Outre les crimes perpétrés dans le passé, les questions de responsabilité et de réconciliation, les problèmes actuels en matière de Droits de l'homme au Sri Lanka étaient à l'ordre du jour lors de la 25^e^ session du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies qui s'est tenue en mars à Genève. Les États membres de l'UE ont coparrainé une résolution qui recommande notamment au gouvernement du Sri Lanka d'enquêter sur les attaques portées contre des journalistes, des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme et d'autres membres de la société civile, de faire rendre des comptes aux auteurs des violences et de prendre des mesures pour éviter de telles attaques à l'avenir. Nous avons invité le gouvernement du Sri Lanka à coopérer étroitement avec le Haut-commissariat des Nations unies aux Droits de l'homme dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la résolution.

Lors de la réunion de la commission mixte en décembre 2013, les questions relatives aux Droits de l'homme figuraient également en haut de l'agenda dans le dialogue de l'UE avec les autorités sri-lankaises.

Avec le concours d'autres organisations internationales, nous suivons de près la situation des Droits de l'homme et nous comptons continuer à soulever ces questions dans nos contacts avec les autorités sri-lankaises. L'adoption de la résolution du Conseil des Droits de l'homme garantit que la situation au Sri Lanka continuera à être examinée dans les enceintes internationales des Droits de l'homme.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004531/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritti dell'uomo nello Sri Lanka

Dopo la fine del conflitto con le Tigri di liberazione del Tamil Eelam (LTTE), nel maggio 2009 il governo del presidente Mahinda Rajapakse ha continuato la repressione contro i suoi detrattori. Infatti, Ruki Fernando, dell'associazione INFORM basata a Colombo, e padre Praveen Mahesan, prete cattolico, sono stati arrestati à Kilinochchi il 16 marzo e detenuti senza alcuna accusa ufficiale, in base alla legge molto draconiana sulla prevenzione del terrorismo.

Se la loro rapida liberazione dopo due giorni di detenzione è una misura positiva, altri militanti pacifici sono stati arrestai in questi ultimi mesi con lo scopo di eliminare la dissidenza.

L'arresto e la detenzione arbitraria di noti difensori dei diritti dell'uomo avrebbero come obiettivo di ridurre al silenzio i detrattori e di distogliere l'attenzione dal mancato rispetto dei diritti dell'uomo.

Nel suo rapporto dal titolo «Authority without Accountability: The Crisis of Impunity in Sri Lanka», la commissione internazionale dei giuristi rivela che le disposizioni della succitata legge sulla prevenzione del terrorismo si traducono in detenzioni arbitrarie, infrangono il diritto dei sospetti a un processo equo e a una procedura regolare e favoriscono la tortura, i maltrattamenti e le sparizioni forzate.

Inoltre, Amnesty International ha ricevuto informazioni molto inquietanti, in base alle quali i servizi segreti srilanchesi avrebbero creato un'unità speciale incaricata di sorvegliare le persone sospettate di trasmettere informazioni all'ONU.

Nonostante due precedenti risoluzioni del Consiglio per i diritti dell'uomo, nel 2012 e nel 2013, lo Sri Lanka non ha preso alcuna disposizione concreta per rendere giustizia alle vittime della guerra civile, ma ha lanciato una campagna aggressiva contro quanti reclamano che i responsabili rendano conto dei loro atti. I difensori dei diritti umani, i militanti, i giornalisti e i membri della società civile che criticano il governo sono regolarmente minacciati e molestati, prendendo particolarmente di mira quelli noti a livello internazionale.

1. Quali sono le possibilità di intervento dell'Unione europea per porre fine a questo regime di repressione e di oltraggio ai diritti umani?

2. In che modo l'Unione europea potrebbe fare pressione sul governo dello Sri Lanka, affinché rispetti i suoi impegni internazionali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

L'UE continua ad essere preoccupata per la situazione dei diritti umani nello Sri Lanka. A quanto ci risulta, negli ultimi mesi le vessazioni nei confronti dei difensori dei diritti umani sono aumentate, specialmente nel nord del paese.

Le attuali preoccupazioni in materia di diritti umani nello Sri Lanka sono state discusse, insieme alle questioni relative ai crimini commessi in passato, alla responsabilità e alla riconciliazione, durante la 25ª sessione del Consiglio delle Nazioni Unite per i diritti umani svoltasi in marzo a Ginevra. Gli Stati membri dell'UE hanno appoggiato una risoluzione che esorta, fra l'altro, il governo dello Sri Lanka a indagare sugli attacchi contro i giornalisti, i difensori dei diritti umani e gli altri membri della società civile, a garantire che i responsabili siano chiamati a rispondere dei loro atti e a prendere provvedimenti per prevenire simili attacchi in futuro. Abbiamo invitato il governo dello Sri Lanka a collaborare strettamente con l'Ufficio dell'Alto commissario per i diritti umani per attuare la risoluzione.

Le questioni relative ai diritti umani sono state inoltre un tema centrale del dialogo tra l'UE e le autorità dello Sri Lanka durante la riunione della commissione mista tenutasi a dicembre 2013.

Stiamo monitorando con attenzione la situazione dei diritti umani insieme ad altre organizzazioni internazionali e intendiamo continuare a sollevare tali questioni nei nostri contatti con le autorità dello Sri Lanka. L'adozione della risoluzione del Consiglio per i diritti umani garantisce che la situazione nello Sri Lanka continui ad essere esaminata anche nelle sedi internazionali pertinenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004531/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Sri Lanka

Since the end of the conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in May 2009, the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse has continued repression against his opponents. In fact, Ruki Fernando of the Colombo-based Inform association and Father Praveen Mahesan, a Catholic priest, were arrested in Kilinochchi on 16 March and are believed to have been detained without any formal charges under the notoriously draconian prevention of terrorism act (PTA).

While their hasty release after two days' detention is a positive step, other peaceful militants have been arrested in recent months in an attempt to stamp out dissidence.

The arrest and arbitrary detention of eminent human rights campaigners seems to be designed to silence detractors and divert attention from human rights violations.

In its report 'Authority without Accountability: The Crisis of Impunity in Sri Lanka', the International Commission of Jurists reveals that the provisions of the PTA have resulted in arbitrary detentions, contravened suspects' rights to a fair trial and due process and facilitated torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances.

Moreover, Amnesty International has received very worrying information to the effect that the Sri Lankan intelligence services have set up a special unit to keep a watch on people suspected of passing information to the UN.

Despite two previous resolutions from the Human Rights Council, in 2012 and 2013, Sri Lanka has taken no measurable steps to bring justice to the victims of its civil war, but has instead launched an aggressive campaign against anyone seeking to hold those responsible to account for their actions. Human rights campaigners, militants, journalists and members of civil society who criticise the government are regularly threatened and harassed. Those who have an international profile are particular targets.

1. What action can the EU take to put an end to this situation of repression and flouting of human rights?

2. How can the EU put pressure on the Sri Lankan government to fulfil its international commitments?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The EU remains concerned about the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. According to reports, harassment of human rights defenders has shown worsening trends in the recent months, especially in the North of the country.

Besides the past crimes, accountability and reconciliation issues, the on-going human rights concerns in Sri Lanka were in focus at the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council in March in Geneva. The EU Member States co-sponsored a resolution which amongst others urges the Government of Sri Lanka to investigate attacks against journalists, human rights defenders and other members of civil society, to hold perpetrators accountable and to take steps to prevent such attacks in the future. We have invited the Government of Sri Lanka to cooperate closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the implementation of the resolution.

Human rights issues were also given prominence in EU dialogue with the Sri Lankan authorities at the Joint Commission meeting in December 2013.

We are monitoring closely the situation of human rights together with other international organisations and intend to continue raising these matters in our contacts with the Sri Lankan authorities. Adoption of the Human Rights Council resolution ensures that the situation in Sri Lanka will also continue to be scrutinised in international human rights fora.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004532/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Droits humains au Mexique

Le jeudi 20 mars, le Mexique devait annoncer aux membres du Conseil des Droits de l'homme les recommandations qu'il adoptera parmi les 176 présentées par ces États pour trouver une issue à la situation catastrophique des droits humains au sein du pays. En effet, des mesures durables et efficaces sont nécessaires afin de lutter contre les disparitions forcées, les actes de torture et les détentions arbitraires, qui constituent des pratiques bien établies, et contre la banalisation des attaques visant les journalistes, les migrants ainsi que les femmes et les hommes qui défendent les droits humains.

Cependant, Amnesty International craint que les autorités mexicaines se dispensent une nouvelle fois de respecter les engagements pris auprès de la communauté internationale.

En effet, en 2009, lorsque le Mexique s'est présenté pour la dernière fois devant cet organe, il a déclaré qu'il mettrait en œuvre la majorité des recommandations. Or, force est de constater qu'il a négligé de nombreuses questions par la suite, échouant alors dans la prévention de la crise des droits humains, toujours présente à l'heure actuelle.

De plus, bien qu'il soit positif que le gouvernement mexicain ait annoncé, le 19 mars, qu'il accepterait la plupart des recommandations, Amnesty International s'interroge sur certains signes inquiétants et redoute que le Mexique ne maintienne le statu quo et que ses paroles ne soient pas suivies d'actes.

Par exemple, les recommandations portant sur l'abolition de l'*arraigo*, une forme de détention ouvrant la porte à de nombreuses violations des droits humains, notamment la torture et l'extorsion d'aveux, ont ainsi été rejetées. En vertu de cette forme de détention provisoire prolongée, un suspect peut être incarcéré pour une durée maximale de 80 jours sans être présenté devant un juge.

Un autre motif de préoccupation majeur est le fait que le Sénat a examiné la semaine dernière une proposition de réforme susceptible d'exclure les violations des droits humains commises par des militaires contre des civils de la liste des infractions que les tribunaux militaires sont habilités à juger.

1. Bien que le Mexique progresse dans la bonne direction, de nombreux efforts sont encore à fournir. Comment l'Union européenne pourrait-elle intervenir afin de contraindre le Mexique à tenir ses engagements internationaux?

2. Il est primordial que le Mexique aille plus loin dans ses démarches concernant les violations des droits humains. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle s'entretenir avec les autorités mexicaines afin de trouver des solutions à ce fléau toujours bien présent?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2014)

Le Mexique est un membre très actif du Conseil des Droits de l'homme des Nationes unies ainsi qu'un partenaire apprécié de l'Union européenne au sein de cette instance. En effet, l'Union européenne et le Mexique partagent un engagement réciproque en faveur de la protection des droits humains, tant au niveau bilatéral que multilatéral. Le partenariat stratégique de 2008 et son plan conjoint de mise en œuvre (2010) ont renforcé la portée de cette coopération en instituant le «dialogue renforcé sur les Droits de l'homme», qui a lieu une fois par an à haut niveau (entre le RSUE pour les Droits de l'homme et le sous-secrétaire d'État du Mexique).

Le système de justice pénale, y compris l'*arraigo* et la réforme de la justice militaire — visant à ce que les tribunaux civils jugent toute violation des Droits de l'homme commise par les forces de l'ordre —, est l'une des priorités de l'Union européenne en matière de Droits de l'homme au Mexique. C'est pourquoi elle est abordée par les voies régulières du dialogue et de la coopération.

Ainsi, l'examen périodique universel, la sécurité, les Droits de l'homme et la lutte contre le crime organisé figurent parmi les sujets des deux dernières sessions du dialogue sur les Droits de l'homme (le dernier ayant été tenu en mars 2014). En outre, l'Union européenne soutient le Mexique dans son programme phare «Laboratoire de cohésion sociale II» et d'autres projets de coopération dans le domaine de la réforme de la justice. Enfin, un dialogue à haut niveau en matière de sécurité et de justice, prévu dans le courant de l'année 2014, servira de cadre de discussion.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004532/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Diritti umani in Messico

Giovedì 20 marzo il Messico doveva annunciare ai membri del Consiglio dei diritti dell'uomo le raccomandazioni che adotterà tra le 176 presentate dagli Stati per trovare una soluzione alla situazione catastrofica dei diritti umani in quel paese. Sono infatti necessarie misure sostenibili ed efficaci al fine di lottare contro le sparizioni forzate, gli atti di tortura e le detenzioni arbitrarie, che costituiscono pratiche consolidate, nonché contro gli attacchi sistematici diretti ai giornalisti, ai migranti e alle donne e agli uomini che difendono i diritti umani.

Amnesty International teme tuttavia che le autorità messicane si esimano ancora una volta dal rispettare gli impegni presi nei confronti della comunità internazionale.

Infatti, l'ultima volta in cui il Messico si è presentato davanti a tale organismo, nel 2009, aveva dichiarato che avrebbe attuato la maggioranza delle raccomandazioni. Si deve tuttavia costatare che il Messico ha in seguito ignorato numerose questioni, fallendo quindi nella prevenzione della crisi dei diritti umani, attualmente sempre presente.

Inoltre, anche se è positivo che il governo messicano ha annunciato, il 19 marzo, di accettare gran parte delle raccomandazioni, Amnesty International s'interroga su alcuni segnali preoccupanti e teme che il Messico mantenga lo status quo e che le sue parole non siano seguite da fatti.

Ad esempio, le raccomandazioni sull'abolizione dell'*arraigo*, una forma di detenzione che può portare a numerose violazioni dei diritti umani, in particolare la tortura e l'estorsione di confessioni, sono state respinte. In base a tale forma di detenzione preventiva prolungata, un sospetto può essere incarcerato per un periodo massimo di 80 giorni senza essere portato davanti al giudice.

Suscita inoltre grande preoccupazione il fatto che la settimana scorsa il Senato ha esaminato una proposta di riforma che potrebbe escludere le violazioni dei diritti umani commesse da militari contro civili dall'elenco dei reati che i tribunali militari sono autorizzati a giudicare.

1. Anche se il Messico si muove nella giusta direzione, sono ancora necessari numerosi sforzi. Come potrebbe intervenire l'Unione europea per obbligare il Messico a rispettare i suoi impegni internazionali?

2. È fondamentale che il Messico compia maggiori progressi nella lotta contro le violazioni dei diritti umani. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante dialogare con le autorità messicane al fine di trovare una soluzione a questo flagello ancora ben presente?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

Il Messico è un membro molto attivo del Consiglio per i diritti umani delle Nazioni Unite e un importante alleato dell'UE in quel contesto. L'UE e il Messico condividono infatti l'impegno di tutelare i diritti umani a livello sia bilaterale sia multilaterale. Il Partenariato strategico del 2008 e il relativo Piano esecutivo congiunto (2010) hanno ampliato la portata di questa collaborazione introducendo il «dialogo rafforzato sui diritti umani», che si svolge una volta all'anno ad alto livello (RSUE per i diritti umani per l'UE e sottosegretario di Stato per il Messico).

Il sistema penale, compreso l'*arraigo* e la riforma della giustizia militare — che mira ad assegnare ai tribunali civili le cause sulle violazioni dei diritti umani commesse dalle forze di sicurezza —, è uno dei temi prioritari dell'UE riguardo ai diritti umani in Messico ed è quindi affrontato attraverso i canali regolari di dialogo e cooperazione.

Il riesame periodico universale, la sicurezza, i diritti umani e la lotta alla criminalità organizzata sono stati tutti all'ordine del giorno delle ultime due sedute del dialogo sui diritti umani (di cui l'ultima nel marzo 2014). Inoltre, l'UE sostiene il Messico mediante il programma «Laboratorio di coesione sociale II» e altri progetti di cooperazione nel campo della riforma della giustizia. Infine, un dialogo ad alto livello sulla sicurezza e sulla giustizia, previsto per la seconda parte del 2014, sarà un'ulteriore opportunità di dialogare su questi temi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004532/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Human rights in Mexico

On Thursday 20 March, Mexico was to announce to members of the Human Rights Council which of the 176 recommendations made by these States it would adopt to resolve the catastrophic human rights situation in the country. Sustainable and effective measures are certainly required to combat the forced disappearances, acts of torture and arbitrary detentions, all of which are well-established practices, and the increasingly regular attacks against journalists, migrants, and men and women who are defending human rights.

However, Amnesty International fears that the Mexican authorities are once again failing to adhere to the commitments they made to the international community.

Indeed, in 2009, the last time that Mexico appeared before this body, it declared that it would implement most of the recommendations. Yet, it must be said that it has overlooked numerous issues since, thus failing to prevent the human rights crisis that we are still witnessing today.

Moreover, even though the Mexican Government's announcement on 19 March that it would accept the majority of the recommendations is good news, Amnesty International questioned certain warning signs and fears that Mexico will maintain the status quo and that its words will not be followed by actions.

For example, the recommendations on the abolition of *arraigo*, a form of detention that violates a number of human rights, namely torture and forced confessions, have been rejected. This type of prolonged temporary detention is used to incarcerate a subject for up to 80 days without appearing before a judge.

Another major cause for concern is the fact that last week the Senate examined a proposed reform that would exclude human rights violations committed by members of the military against civilians from the list of offences that military tribunals are authorised to rule on.

1. Although Mexico is moving in the right direction, there is still a lot of effort to be made. How could the European Union take action to compel Mexico to stick to its international commitments?

2. It is vital for Mexico to go further in its approach to human rights violations. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to engage in talks with the Mexican authorities in order to find solutions to this problem that still plagues us?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

Mexico is a very active member of the UN Human Rights Council and a valued partner for the EU in this forum. Indeed, the EU and Mexico share a mutual commitment to the protection of human rights both at bilateral and multilateral level. The 2008 Strategic Partnership and its Joint Executive Plan (2010) have enhanced the scope of cooperation by introducing the 'enhanced dialogue on human rights' that takes place on yearly basis at high level (EUSR for Human Rights and Mexican Under-Secretary of State).

The criminal justice system, including 'arraigo' and the military justice reform — aiming at having civilian courts judging human right violations committed by security forces -, is one of the human rights priorities for the EU in Mexico and is hence addressed through the regular channels of dialogue and cooperation.

Thus, the UPR exercise, security, human rights, and the fight against organised crime figured among the topics of the last two sessions of the Human Rights Dialogue (last one in March 2014). In addition, the EU is supporting Mexico through its landmark 'Social Cohesion Laboratory II' programme and other cooperation projects in the field of justice reform. Finally, a High-Level Dialogue on Security and Justice, envisaged later in 2014, will provide a forum for discussion.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004533/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Moldavie/Russie

La bande de territoire russophone que constitue la Transnistrie, dépendante économiquement de la Russie, a fait sécession de la Moldavie en 1992. Les habitants de la région, qui n'est pas reconnue comme un État indépendant par la communauté internationale, se sont prononcés en majorité, lors d'un référendum en 2006, pour rejoindre la Russie. Moscou maintient déjà plusieurs milliers de soldats sur ce territoire.

Des responsables de Transnistrie ont appelé en mars les parlementaires russes à préparer une loi permettant l'absorption de la région par la Russie.

Moscou, de son côté, s'est plaint que la frontière de la Transnistrie était bloquée par la Moldavie et l'Ukraine.

La Moldavie, majoritairement roumanophone, a pressé l'Union européenne d'accélérer la signature d'un accord d'association et d'offrir des perspectives claires d'adhésion à son pays.

1. Où en est l'Union européenne concernant l'accord d'association avec la Moldavie?

2. Quels autres moyens d'agir pourraient être développés afin de protéger la Moldavie de l'invasion russe?

3. Sachant que la population russophone au sein des pays baltes représente parfois près d'un tiers de la population nationale, comment l'Union européenne pourrait-elle s'armer face à des situations semblables à celles de l'Ukraine ou encore de la région de Transnistrie?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(17 juin 2014)

L'accord d'association avec la République de Moldavie sera signé à Bruxelles le 27 juin 2014. L'Union européenne, à tous les niveaux, reste étroitement en contact avec les autorités moldaves de manière consultative afin de garantir que tous les aspects relatifs à l'accord sont expliqués correctement, y compris pour toute personne potentiellement concernée, et apporte une aide concrète pour dissiper le mythe de toute propagande anti-Europe.

Le 8 avril 2014, le gouvernement moldave a tenu sa première et fructueuse réunion explicative concernant l'accord avec les autorités russes, la prochaine réunion étant prévue le 7 juillet. Chisinau continue également à débattre des questions de migration avec Moscou. Enfin, le Service européen pour l'action extérieure est parvenu à un accord avec les autorités moldaves en vue d'une réforme approfondie du système de sécurité du pays. Des conseillers de haut niveau ont été envoyés dans les différentes institutions de sécurité moldaves, y compris au ministère de la défense. Le ministère de l'intérieur a été réformé en 2013, dans le cadre du plan d'action concernant la libéralisation du régime des visas.

D'un point de vue général, les tensions entre Chisinau et les autorités séparatistes de Transnistrie sont actuellement moins importantes qu'il y a quelques mois; une réunion du format de négociation «5+2» au sujet du conflit transnistrien se tiendra à Vienne les 5 et 6 juin, suivie d'un séminaire de haut niveau de trois jours sur les mesures visant à instaurer la confiance, sous l'égide de l'OSCE. L'Union européenne finance un vaste programme (41 millions d'euros) soutenant des projets destinés à instaurer la confiance, auxquels prendront part des organisations de la société civile des deux camps.

Bien que la position des États baltiques ne puisse être comparée à la situation en Ukraine ni à celle de la Transnistrie, la Commission et la haute représentante entretiennent un dialogue permanent avec les États membres au sujet de l'incidence et des ramifications possibles des événements récents en Ukraine.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004533/14
alla Commissione
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Moldavia/Russia

La striscia di territorio russofono che costituisce la Transnistria, economicamente dipendente dalla Russia, si è separata dalla Moldavia nel 1992. Nel referendum del 2006 gli abitanti della regione, che non è riconosciuta come Stato indipendente dalla comunità internazionale, si sono pronunciati in maggioranza a favore del ricongiungimento con la Russia. Nel territorio Mosca dispone già di varie migliaia di soldati.

In marzo alcuni responsabili del Transnistria hanno chiesto ai parlamentari russi di preparare una legge che consenta alla Russia di annettere la regione.

Mosca, da parte sua, ha lamentato che la frontiera della Transnistria è bloccata dalla Moldavia e dall'Ucraina.

La Moldavia, paese perlopiù di lingua rumena, ha esortato l'Unione europea ad accelerare la firma di un accordo di associazione e a offrirle chiare prospettive di adesione.

1. Qual è lo stato di avanzamento dei lavori per quanto riguarda l'accordo di associazione UE-Moldavia?

2. Quali altri mezzi per agire potrebbero essere messi a punto per proteggere la Moldavia da un'invasione russa?

3. Consapevoli del fatto che la popolazione russofona nei Paesi Baltici rappresenta talvolta circa un terzo della popolazione nazionale, come potrebbe l'Unione europea prepararsi a situazioni analoghe a quelle dell'Ucraina o della Transnistria?

Risposta di Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(17 giugno 2014)

L'accordo di associazione con la Repubblica di Moldova sarà firmato a Bruxelles il 27 giugno 2014. L'Unione europea, a tutti i livelli, ha mantenuto comunque strette consultazioni con le autorità moldove per assicurare che tutti gli aspetti derivanti dall'accordo siano correttamente illustrati, anche a tutti i soggetti potenzialmente interessati, e ha fornito aiuti concreti per dissipare le voci di propaganda anti-UE.

L'8 aprile 2014 il governo moldavo ha tenuto una prima riunione esplicativa sull'accordo con le autorità russe, il cui esito è stato positivo; la prossima riunione dovrebbe seguire il 7 luglio. Chisinau continua a discutere con Mosca sulle questioni inerenti alla migrazione. Infine, il servizio europeo per l'azione esterna ha raggiunto un accordo con le autorità moldove in merito ad una profonda riforma del sistema di sicurezza del paese: consulenti ad alto livello sono stati inviati presso le istituzioni di sicurezza moldove, compreso il ministero della Difesa. Il ministero degli Interni è stato riformato nel 2013, nell'ambito del piano d'azione sulla liberalizzazione dei visti.

Nel complesso, la situazione tra Chisinau e le autorità separatiste della Transnistria è attualmente meno tesa rispetto ad alcuni mesi or sono; il 5-6 giugno si terrà a Vienna una riunione nel formato di negoziato «5 + 2» sul conflitto transnistriano, seguita da un seminario ad alto livello di tre giorni sulle misure miranti a rafforzare la fiducia, sotto l'egida dell'OSCE. L'UE finanzia un vasto programma (41 milioni di euro) di progetti intesi a rafforzare la fiducia, cui partecipano organizzazioni della società civile di entrambe le parti.

Se da un lato la posizione degli Stati baltici non può essere confrontata con la situazione in Ucraina e in Transnistria, dall'altro, la Commissione e l'Alto Rappresentante sono in costante dialogo con gli Stati membri riguardo all'impatto e alle possibili ramificazioni dei recenti sviluppi della situazione in Ucraina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004533/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Moldova/Russia

The strip of Russian-speaking territory making up Transnistria, which is economically dependent on Russia, seceded from Moldova in 1992. In a referendum held in 2006, a majority of the inhabitants of the region, which the international community does not recognise as an independent State, voted in favour of rejoining Russia. Moscow already has several thousand soldiers stationed in the territory.

Transnistrian leaders called on the Russian parliament in March to draft a law enabling Russia to absorb the region.

For its part, Moscow complained that Moldova and Ukraine were blocking the Transnistrian border.

Moldova, which has a Romanian-speaking majority, has urged the EU to speed up signature of an association agreement and offer the country clear prospects of accession.

1. Where has the EU got to as regards the association agreement with Moldova?

2. What other action could be taken to protect Moldova against a Russian invasion?

3. Knowing that Russian-speakers can sometimes make up almost a third of the population of Baltic countries, how can the EU arm itself against situations like those of Ukraine or the region of Transnistria?

Answer given by Ms Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Association Agreement with the Republic of Moldova will be signed in Brussels on 27 June 2014. The European Union, at all levels, has maintained otherwise close advisory contact with the Moldovan authorities to ensure that all aspects stemming from the Agreement are correctly explained, including to all those potentially concerned, and has provided concrete help to dispel the myths of anti-EU propaganda.

On 8 April 2014, the Moldovan government held a first, successful, explanatory meeting on the Agreement with the Russian authorities; the next meeting should follow on 7 July. Chisinau keeps also discussing migration issues with Moscow. Finally, the European External Action Service has reached agreement with the Moldovan authorities on an in-depth reform of the country's security system. High-level advisers have been dispatched to the Moldovan security institutions, including the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry of Interior was reformed in 2013, in the context of the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan.

Overall, tensions between Chisinau and the Transnistrian separatist authorities are currently lower than a few months ago; a meeting of the '5+2' negotiating format on the Transnistrian conflict will take place in Vienna on 5-6 June, followed by a three-day high-level seminar on confidence-building measures, under the aegis of the OSCE. The EU funds a large programme (EUR 41 million) of confidence-building projects involving civil society organisations from both sides.

While the position of the Baltic States cannot be compared with the situation in Ukraine or as regards Transnistria, the Commission and the HR are in constant dialogue with Member States over the impact and possible ramifications of recent developments in Ukraine.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004534/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Fédéralisation de l'Ukraine

La semaine dernière, la Russie a proposé la solution de la fédéralisation de l'Ukraine afin de sortir le pays de la crise. Selon Moscou, cela permettrait d'apaiser les tensions qui règnent dans les régions du sud et de l'est, très proches culturellement et économiquement de la Russie. L'Ukraine a officiellement rejeté la proposition russe, priant Moscou de cesser de «prêcher» à son sujet et de se concentrer sur ses propres problèmes.

En effet, les autorités ukrainiennes craignent une nouvelle invasion et la répétition du scénario qui a mené, en trois semaines, à la perte de la Crimée.

Selon l'expert Vadym Karassiov, la fédéralisation signifierait une forme déguisée de partition du pays qui, au vu de la géographie de l'Ukraine, mènerait à une situation où les régions de l'ouest se trouveraient sous tutelle occidentale et celles de l'est sous tutelle russe.

1. Comment la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante considère-t-elle la proposition de la Russie et la réaction de l'Ukraine à l'égard de la fédéralisation du pays? Serait-ce une solution à envisager ou, au contraire, à proscrire?

2. Dans le cas où, selon la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, ce serait une solution à envisager, qu'en est-il des risques de mainmise de Moscou sur l'Ukraine?

3. Dans le cas où, selon la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, cette option serait à proscrire, quelles solutions possibles sont à envisager? La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante considère-t-elle une certaine autonomie locale ou encore une réforme administrative comme des réponses pertinentes à l'égard de la situation politique du pays?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2014)

L'Union européenne a encouragé l'Ukraine à poursuivre ses réformes politiques prévues, y compris la réforme constitutionnelle. Elle se félicite de la volonté exprimée par les autorités ukrainiennes de faire en sorte que les organismes publics soient représentatifs, ouverts à tous et reflètent les diversités régionales. Les autorités ukrainiennes se sont engagées à œuvrer en faveur de la décentralisation qui était au cœur du premier dialogue national du 14 mai 2014 à Kiev. Nous soutenons pleinement ces efforts et l'appropriation de ce processus par les autorités ukrainiennes. La déclaration des chefs d'État ou de gouvernement du 27 mai 2014 formule la dernière position générale de l'UE sur l'Ukraine.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004534/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) e Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Federalizzazione dell'Ucraina

La settimana scorsa la Russia ha proposto la federalizzazione dell'Ucraina al fine di risolvere la crisi nel paese. Secondo Mosca, tale soluzione consentirebbe di placare le tensioni che regnano nelle regioni meridionali e orientali, molto vicine alla Russia tanto culturalmente quanto economicamente. L'Ucraina ha ufficialmente rifiutato la proposta russa, pregando Mosca di smettere di «predicare» su questioni che riguardano l'Ucraina e di concentrarsi sui propri problemi.

Le autorità ucraine temono infatti una nuova invasione e il ripetersi della situazione che ha portato in tre settimane alla perdita della Crimea.

Secondo l'esperto Vadym Karassiov, la federalizzazione rappresenterebbe una forma mascherata di divisione del paese che, data la geografia dell'Ucraina, porterebbe a una situazione in cui le regioni dell'ovest si troverebbero sotto la tutela occidentale, mentre quelle dell'est sotto la tutela russa.

1. Come considera l'Alto Rappresentante la proposta della Russia e la reazione dell'Ucraina in merito alla federalizzazione del paese? Si tratta di una soluzione da considerare o, al contrario, da impedire?

2. Nel caso in cui ritenga che sia una soluzione auspicabile, come valuta l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente i rischi di assoggettamento dell'Ucraina da parte della Russia?

3. Nel caso in cui ritenga che sia una soluzione da impedire, può l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente indicare quali soluzioni possibili è necessario prevedere? Ritiene l'Alto Rappresentante/Vicepresidente che una certa autonomia locale o ancora una riforma amministrativa siano risposte pertinenti in merito alla situazione politica del paese?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

L'UE ha incoraggiato l'Ucraina a portare avanti le riforme politiche previste tra cui, in particolare, la riforma della costituzione e si è rallegrata della volontà del governo ucraino di attuare i propri impegni per garantire il carattere rappresentativo e inclusivo delle strutture governative, in modo da riflettere la diversità regionale. Le autorità ucraine si sono impegnate a progredire verso il decentramento, tema centrale di un primo dialogo nazionale svoltosi a Kiev il 14 maggio 2014. L'Unione sostiene pienamente l'impegno e il coinvolgimento del governo ucraino in questo processo. La dichiarazione dei capi di Stato e di governo del 27 maggio 2014 illustra la più recente posizione globale dell'UE sull'Ucraina.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004534/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D), Franco Frigo (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Federalisation of Ukraine

Last week, Russia proposed a solution to federalise Ukraine in order to bring an end to the crisis in the country. Moscow says that this would help to ease the tensions that have dominated the regions in the south and the east that are closely linked to Russia culturally and economically. Ukraine has officially rejected Russia's proposal, calling on Moscow to stop 'lecturing' it and to concentrate on its own problems.

Indeed, Ukrainian authorities are fearful of a new invasion and a repetition of the scenes three weeks ago that led to the loss of Crimea.

According to expert Vadym Karassiov, federalisation would constitute a surreptitious attempt to divide the country, which would, given the geography of Ukraine, lead to a situation in which the regions in the west would come under the protection of the West and those in east would fall under Russia's influence.

1. What does the Vice-President/High Representative think of Russia's proposal of and Ukraine's response to federalising the country? Would this solution be worth contemplating or, conversely, should it be ruled out?

2. If this solution were to be contemplated, what risks does the Vice-President/High Representative believe exist in terms of Russian domination of Ukraine?

3. If this option were to be ruled out, what solutions does the Vice-President/High Representative believe could be considered? Does the Vice-President/High Representative believe that a certain degree of local autonomy or even administrative reforms would be appropriate responses to the political situation in the country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The EU has encouraged Ukraine to continue to move ahead with its planned political reforms, including notably the constitutional reform, and it has welcomed the will of the Ukrainian government to implement its commitments to ensure the representative nature and inclusiveness of governmental structures, reflecting regional diversity. The Ukrainian authorities have pledged to work towards decentralisation which was in the focus of a first National Dialogue that took place in Kyiv on 14 May 2014. We fully support these efforts and the ownership of Ukrainian government in this process. The statement of the Heads of State or Government of 27 May 2014 provides the latest comprehensive position of the EU on Ukraine.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004535/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Roche et Novartis

L'Autorité de la concurrence a mené le mardi 8 avril des perquisitions au siège des deux laboratoires suisses Roche et Novartis où elle a procédé à des saisies.

La Commission soupçonnerait-elle les deux laboratoires de s'être entendus pour favoriser l'un de leurs médicaments? Si oui, lequel?

La Commission pourrait-elle donner des explications complémentaires sur les travaux d'enquête et les responsabilités de chacun?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(2 juillet 2014)

L'autorité française de la concurrence (ANC) a procédé à des inspections dans les locaux des entreprises Roche et Novartis dans le cadre d'une enquête relative à des pratiques anticoncurrentielles présumées dans le secteur des médicaments destinés à traiter certaines pathologies de l'œil, plus spécifiquement la dégénérescence maculaire exsudative liée à l'âge (DMLA).

La Commission note que, le 27 février 2014, l'autorité italienne de la concurrence a adopté une décision condamnant les pratiques de Roche et Novartis concernant leurs médicaments respectifs, l'Avastin (bevacizumab) et le Lucentis (ranibizumab). Tous deux sont des médicaments anti-angiogéniques (anti-VEGF), mais l'Avastin n'est indiqué que dans le traitement des cancers, alors que le Lucentis n'est prescrit que pour soigner la DMLA. Nonobstant, l'Avastin est parfois également utilisé pour traiter la DMLA («usage hors notice»). La décision de l'autorité italienne de la concurrence a condamné Roche et Novartis pour des ententes visant à empêcher l'usage hors notice de l'Avastin pour le traitement de la DMLA. Les résultats de cette décision et les pratiques en cause sont, en fait et en droit, étroitement liés au cadre réglementaire italien, qui autorise sous certaines conditions l'usage hors notice de certains produits pharmaceutiques. De ce fait, les conclusions concernant les pratiques constatées en Italie ne constituent pas, en soi, une indication de l'existence, ou non, d'un comportement similaire dans d'autres États membres.

La Commission n'ignore pas que cette situation a suscité des inquiétudes dans plusieurs États membres. Elle reste en contact étroit avec les autorités nationales de la concurrence et s'emploie à recueillir de plus amples informations. Elle ne peut pas, à ce stade, s'étendre davantage sur le contenu précis des démarches qu'elle a entreprises dans le cadre de son enquête.

En outre, le sujet soulève certaines questions réglementaires, telles que l'absence, au niveau de l'UE, d'une autorisation de mise sur le marché de l'Avastin pour le traitement de la dégénérescence maculaire liée à l'âge.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004535/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Roche and Novartis

The competition authority carried out searches at the head office of the two Swiss laboratories Roche and Novartis on 8 April and items were confiscated.

Does the Commission suspect the two laboratories of having colluded in order to promote one of their medicines? If so, which one?

Could the Commission provide additional explanations on the investigative work and each party's responsibilities?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2014)

The French National Competition Authority (NCA) conducted inspections on the premises of the Roche and Novartis undertakings in the framework of an investigation of alleged anticompetitive practices in the sector of medicines to treat eye conditions, specifically wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

The Commission notes that, on 27 February 2014, the Italian NCA adopted a decision on practices by Roche and Novartis regarding their respective drugs Avastin (bevacizumab) and Lucentis (ranibizumab). Both are anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF) medicines, but Avastin is only indicated for cancer treatment, and Lucentis is only indicated for AMD treatment. Notwithstanding, Avastin is sometimes also used to treat AMD (so-called off-label use). The Italian NCA decision condemned arrangements by Roche and Novartis to curb off-label use of Avastin for the treatment of AMD. The findings of that decision, and the practices in question, are, factually and legally, closely related to the Italian regulatory framework, which, under specific conditions, authorises the off-label use of certain pharmaceuticals. Hence, the conclusions on the practices in Italy are not in themselves an indication of the existence, or not, of similar behaviour in other Member States.

The Commission is aware that this situation has raised concerns in several Member States. It remains in close contact with NCAs and is gathering more information. It cannot comment at this time on the precise content of any of its investigative activities.

In addition, the issue raises some regulatory questions, such as the absence, at EU level, of a marketing authorisation for the treatment of age-related macular degeneration with Avastin.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004536/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: Stockage européen des ressources

L'Union européenne doit renforcer ses capacités de stockage de gaz et exploiter d'autres sources de production d'énergie pour assurer la sécurité de ses approvisionnements, a souligné mardi la Commission européenne.

Le risque d'un arrêt des fournitures transitant par la Russie, comme en 2009, est réel.

Le rôle du stockage et des sources alternatives de production nationales doit être examiné avec soin dans ce but, a souligné la Commission dans un communiqué.

L'an dernier, l'UE a acheté 133 milliards de m^3 à la Russie, soit 25 % de sa consommation, pour une facture de 35 milliards d'euros. Le prix varie entre 350 et 400 euros pour 1 000 m^3 selon les contrats. Or, près de la moitié de ces achats, soit 65 milliards de m^3, transitent par le réseau de gazoducs ukrainiens.

L'Ukraine, pour sa part, consomme 50 milliards de m^3 de gaz par an. Elle en produit 20 milliards et achète les 30 milliards restants à la Russie.

Or, la sécurité des achats de gaz russe transitant par l'Ukraine est compromise depuis la décision de Gazprom d'augmenter le prix du gaz vendu à l'Ukraine de 270 à près de 500 dollars les 1 000 m^3. La Russie veut aussi conditionner la poursuite des ventes à l'Ukraine au règlement d'une dette de 1,71 milliard de dollars due par la compagnie ukrainienne Naftogaz et au versement d'une somme de 11,4 milliards de dollars correspondant aux rabais accordés pendant les quatre dernières années.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission? Partage-t-elle notre avis?

2. Que propose-t-elle concrètement?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(16 juin 2014)

La position de la Commission sur le renforcement de la sécurité de l'approvisionnement énergétique a été définie dans la stratégie européenne de sécurité énergétique qu'elle a récemment adoptée ([1]). Cette stratégie contient plusieurs propositions relatives au débit et au stockage du gaz, ainsi qu'à la diversification des sources d'approvisionnement. En outre, la Commission joue le rôle de médiateur entre l'Ukraine et la Russie afin de trouver un accord sur les livraisons de gaz, notamment en ce qui concerne les paiements en suspens de Naftogaz à Gazprom et le prix des futures livraisons.

([1]) COM(2014)330 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004536/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: European resource storage

On Tuesday, the European Commission stressed that the European Union must strengthen its capacities for storing gas and exploiting other sources of energy production in order to safeguard the security of its supplies.

There is a real risk of disruption to supplies transiting through Russia, as happened in 2009.

In a press release, the Commission stressed that the role of storage and alternative sources of national production must be examined carefully for this reason.

Last year, the EU bought 133 billion cubic metres from Russia, that is 25% of its consumption, for a sum of 35 billion euros. The price varies between 350 and 400 euros per 1 000 cubic metres, depending on the contract. However, around one half of these purchases, that is 65 billion cubic metres, transits through the Ukrainian pipeline network.

Ukraine itself uses 50 billion cubic metres of gas per year. The country produces 20 billion and buys the remaining 30 billion from Russia.

However, the security of purchases of Russian gas transiting through Ukraine has been compromised since the decision of Gazprom to increase the price of gas sold to Ukraine from 270 dollars to around 500 per 1 000 cubic metres. In addition, Russia wishes to make future sales to Ukraine dependent on the settlement of a debt of 1.71 billion dollars owed by the Ukrainian Naftogaz company, and on the payment of a sum of 11.4 billion dollars representing rebates agreed over the last four years.

1. What is the Commission's position? Does it share our opinion?

2. What, specifically, does it propose?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The Commission's position on enhancing security of supply in the field of energy has been set out in its recently adopted European Energy Security Strategy ([1]). This includes various proposals related to the flow and storage of gas, as well as diversification of sources of supply. Moreover, the Commission is actively mediating between Ukraine and Russia in order to find an agreement on gas deliveries, including on the issue of outstanding payments from Naftogaz to Gazprom, and on the price for future deliveries.

([1]) COM(2014) 330.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004537/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Esclusione dei meridionali in un annuncio di lavoro

Il titolo IV del trattato che istituisce la Comunità europea (TCE) definisce la politica dell'Unione europea in materia di «visti, asilo, immigrazione e altre politiche connesse alla libera circolazione delle persone».

La libera circolazione delle persone fu inizialmente concepita dai trattati istitutivi come libera circolazione degli operatori economici al fine di prestare lavoro subordinato nell'UE. Successivamente, con gli accordi di Schengen del 1985 e il trattato di Maastricht, che ha introdotto l'istituto della cittadinanza europea, si è giunti all'attuale significato, includendo il diritto di soggiorno e circolazione dei cittadini europei in tutto il territorio europeo.

La libera circolazione delle persone comporta l'eliminazione di ogni discriminazione tra lavoratori degli Stati membri fondata sulla nazionalità per quanto riguarda l'impiego e la retribuzione, compreso il diritto di rispondere a offerte di lavoro nell'Unione europea (articolo 45 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE).

La libera circolazione delle persone implica anche il divieto di restrizioni (articolo 49 del Trattato).

In una recente offerta di lavoro, questo diritto non è stato rispettato, in quanto è stato precluso l'accesso al colloquio di lavoro a tutti coloro che provenivano dall'Italia del Sud e agli stranieri.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. ritiene opportuno la Commissione effettuare una verifica dell'accaduto e provvedere a sanzionarlo, vegliando a che tali situazioni non si riproducano in futuro?

2. Esistono controlli comunitari a tal proposito?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

La Commissione europea, nel suo ruolo di custode dei trattati, segue il recepimento e l'applicazione della normativa dell'UE ad opera degli Stati membri e, in caso di violazioni, può avviare procedure volte ad assicurarne la corretta applicazione.

In singoli casi, come quello menzionato dall'Onorevole deputato, la Commissione non può sostituirsi alle istituzioni nazionali competenti e alle procedure di composizione delle controversie per quanto concerne l'applicazione della legislazione nazionale e il recepimento della legislazione dell'UE. Spetta ai tribunali nazionali competenti verificare e stabilire tutti i fatti pertinenti e far rispettare la legge vigente. L'articolo 45 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea è direttamente applicabile e le parti attrici possono appellarvisi nei procedimenti intentati innanzi ai tribunali nazionali.

Per assicurare una migliore applicazione a livello nazionale del diritto dei cittadini dell'UE di lavorare in un altro Stato membro la Commissione ha proposto, il 26 aprile 2013, una direttiva del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alle misure intese ad agevolare l'esercizio dei diritti conferiti ai lavoratori nel quadro della libera circolazione dei lavoratori. Tale direttiva, adottata in prima lettura il 14 aprile 2014, intende rimuovere gli ostacoli esistenti che si frappongono alla libera circolazione dei lavoratori, come ad esempio la mancata conoscenza delle regole dell'UE tra i datori di lavoro pubblici e privati e le difficoltà che i cittadini mobili incontrano per trovare informazioni e assistenza negli Stati membri ospitanti ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-421_en.htm . Testo non ancora pubblicato sulla Gazzetta ufficiale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004537/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Job advertisement excluding southerners

Title IV of the Treaty Establishing the European Community (EC Treaty) set out the European Union's policy on 'visas, asylum, immigration and other policies related to the free movement of persons.'

The founding treaties originally conceived the free movement of persons as a free movement of economic operators, to carry out work under contracts of employment in the EU. Later came the 1985 Schengen Agreements and the Maastricht Treaty, which introduced the concept of European citizenship. Thus the term assumed its current meaning, which includes the right of European citizens to circulate and reside freely in Europe.

The free movement of persons entails elimination of all nationality-based discrimination between workers of the Member States, with regard to employment and pay. This includes the right to respond to job offers in the European Union (Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).

The free movement of persons also implies a prohibition of restrictions (Article 49 of the Treaty).

A recent job advertisement did not respect this right. Instead, it excluded from job interviews anyone coming from southern Italy, and foreigners.

1. Does the Commission think it worth verifying the occurrence, imposing penalties and ensuring that such situations do not recur in future?

2. Do Community controls exist in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The European Commission, as the Guardian of the Treaties, monitors the transposition and application of EC law by Member States and, in case of infringements, may start procedures aimed at its correct enforcement.

In individual cases such as those to which the Honourable Member is referring, the Commission cannot replace competent national institutions and dispute resolution procedures in applying national legislation implementing EC law. It is for the competent national courts to verify and establish all pertinent facts and enforce applicable law. Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is directly effective and can be relied on by complainants in proceedings before national courts.

In order to ensure a better application at national level of EU citizens' right to work in another Member State, on 26 April 2013 the Commission proposed a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement of workers. This directive adopted in first reading on 14 April 2014, aims to remove existing obstacles to the free movement of workers, such as the lack of awareness of EU rules among public and private employers and the difficulties faced by mobile citizens to get information and assistance in the host Member States ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-421_en.htm text not yet published in the Official Journal.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004538/14
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(11. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Asetaldehydin määrät elintarvikkeissa

Kansainvälinen syöväntutkimuskeskus (IARC) totesi vuonna 2009 alkoholijuomien sisältämän asetaldehydin olevan karsinogeenista ihmiselle. Tällä perusteella Euroopan komission nimeämä tieteellinen asiantuntijaryhmä (SCCS) päivitti uudelleen kosmeettisia tuotteita koskevan ohjeistuksensa. Uuden ja yksimielisen suosituksen perusteella kosmeettisessa lopputuotteessa saa olla asetaldehydiä korkeintaan 5 milligrammaa litrassa. Elintarvikkeiden osalta mitään raja-arvoa ei ole määritelty, vaikka kaupallisissa elintarvikkeissa, kuten jugurteissa, on osoitettu olevan asetaldehydiä yli 5 mg litrassa. Monet alkoholijuomat ylittävät yli 100-kertaisesti kosmeettisille tuotteille sallitun korkeimman asetaldehydipitoisuuden.

EU säätelee karsinogeenisten aineiden käyttöä osana muun muassa tuoteturvallisuus- ja elintarvikelainsäädäntöä.

Elintarvikelainsäädäntöä koskevassa asetuksessa todetaan, että elintarvikelainsäädäntö perustuu tieteellisiin näyttöihin (Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 178/2002).

Onko komissio asetaldehydin karsinogeenisuutta korostavien tutkimusten valossa aikeissa asettaa asetaldehydin määrälle raja-arvon elintarvikkeisiin ja alkoholijuomiin?

Jos ei, miten komissio aikoo varmistaa, ettei EU-alueella myytävissä alkoholijuomissa ja elintarvikkeissa ole kuluttajille haitallisia määriä asetaldehydiä?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(5. kesäkuuta 2014)

Asetaldehydi on elintarvikkeissa käytettävä aromi, joka sisältyy unionin aromiluetteloon ([1]).

Alkoholijuomien asetaldehydi on etanolikäymisen sivutuote. Asetaldehydiä on myös meijerituotteissa, kuten jogurtissa. Asetaldehydin löytyminen elintarvikkeista ei liity viimeaikaisiin prosessien muutoksiin, vaan asetaldehydi on yleisesti käytetty luontainen aromi hapatetuissa elintarvikkeissa. Myös monet hedelmät kuten omenat ja kasvikset kuten tomaatit sisältävät mitattavissa olevia määriä asetaldehydiä. Vaikka asetaldehydiä on monissa elintarvikkeissa, ei ole tiedossa, esiintyykö sitä luonnossa ja onko tämä luonnossa esiintyvä asetaldehydi erilaista kuin käymisprosessin sivutuotteena syntyvä asetaldehydi.

Komissio saattaa asian jäsenvaltioiden toimivaltaisten viranomaisten käsittelyyn ja pyytää tarvittaessa Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomaista (EFSA) arvioimaan terveysriskejä sen mukaan, onko elintarvikkeissa oleva asetaldehydi prosessin sivutuotteena syntynyt haitta-aine vai luontainen aromi. Terveysriskien arvioinnin pohjalta harkitaan, onko asianmukaista asettaa enimmäismäärät asetaldehydille elintarvikkeissa ja alkoholijuomissa.

Asetuksen (EY) N:o 178/2002 ([2]) 14 artiklan mukaisesti elintarvikkeita, jotka eivät ole turvallisia, ei saa saattaa markkinoille. Näin ollen niitä alkoholijuomia ja elintarvikkeita, joiden sisältämät asetaldehydimäärät ovat kuluttajille haitallisia, ei saa saattaa markkinoille, tai vastaavasti, kun ne on jo saatettu markkinoille, on ne vedettävä pois markkinoilta.

([1]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 1334/2008, annettu 16 päivänä joulukuuta 2008, elintarvikkeissa käytettävistä aromeista ja tietyistä ainesosista, joilla on aromaattisia ominaisuuksia, sekä neuvoston asetuksen (ETY) N:o 1601/91, asetusten (EY) N:o 2232/96 ja (EY) N:o 110/2008 sekä direktiivin 2000/13/EY muuttamisesta (EUVL L 354, 31.12.2008, s. 34).

([2]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston asetus (EY) N:o 178/2002, annettu 28 päivänä tammikuuta 2002, elintarvikelainsäädäntöä koskevista yleisistä periaatteista ja vaatimuksista, Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomaisen perustamisesta sekä elintarvikkeiden turvallisuuteen liittyvistä menettelyistä (EYVL L 31, 1.2.2002, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004538/14
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Quantities of acetaldehyde in food products

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) announced in 2009 that acetaldehyde in alcoholic beverages was carcinogenic in human beings. On this basis, the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) set up by the Commission again updated its guidelines on cosmetic products. On the basis of a new unanimous recommendation, a cosmetic end-product is not permitted to contain more than 5 mg of acetaldehyde per litre. No limit has been laid down for foods, although commercial food products such as yoghurts have been shown to contain more than 5 mg of acetaldehyde per litre. Many alcoholic beverages contain levels of acetaldehyde that exceed by a factor of more than 100 the limit which applies to cosmetics.

The EU regulates the use of carcinogenic substances as part, *inter alia*, of legislation on product safety and food products.

The regulation on food products states that food legislation is based on scientific evidence [Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council].

In the light of research which stresses the carcinogenic nature of acetaldehyde, does the Commission intend to set a limit for acetaldehyde in food or alcoholic beverages?

If not, how will the Commission ensure that alcoholic beverages and food products offered for sale in the EU do not contain levels of acetaldehyde which are harmful to consumers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

Acetaldehyde is included in the Union list of flavourings for use in and on foods ([1]).

Acetaldehyde is found in alcoholic beverages as a metabolite of ethanol. It is also present in dairy products such as yoghurt. The discovery of acetaldehyde in foodstuffs is not due to recent changes in processes, as acetaldehyde is a well-known natural flavouring agent in such fermented food products. Also many fruits like apples and vegetables like tomatoes contain measurable levels of acetaldehyde. Even if present in many foods, the bioavailability of acetaldehyde is unknown and may or may not be different to the acetaldehyde formed as the main metabolite of alcohol.

The Commission will raise the issue with the competent authorities of the Member States and, if appropriate, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) will be requested to assess the risk for human health related to the presence of acetaldehyde in food as process contaminant or as a natural flavour. Taking into account the outcome of the risk assessment, the appropriateness of setting maximum levels for acetaldehyde in food and alcoholic beverages will be considered.

In accordance with Article 14 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 ([2]), food that is not safe shall not be placed on the market. Consequently, alcoholic beverages and food products which contain levels of acetaldehyde harmful to consumers shall not be placed on the market or, when already placed on the market, shall be withdrawn from the market.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1334/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16.12.2008 on flavourings and certain food ingredients with flavouring properties for use in and on foods and amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 1601/91, Regulations (EC) No 2232/96 and (EC) No 110/2008 and Directive 2000/13/EC (OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 34).

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28.1.2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety. (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1).

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004539/14
komissiolle
Petri Sarvamaa (PPE)
(11. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Hyvän kauppatavan vastaiset käytännöt yritysten välisessä elintarviketoimitusketjussa

Komissio on omassa vihreässä kirjassaan hyvän kauppatavan vastaisista käytännöistä yritysten välisessä elintarvike- ja non-food-toimitusketjussa Euroopassa sekä toteuttamassaan julkisessa kuulemisessa todennut, että elintarvikeketjussa esiintyy paljon epäreiluja käytäntöjä.

Kuten vihreässä kirjassa todetaan, hyvän kauppatavan vastainen epätasapainoinen tilanne voi käytännössä ajaa esimerkiksi maataloustuottajat nurkkaan. Maataloustuottajilla on usein rajallinen mahdollisuus valita tuotantonsa ostavat liikekumppanit, eivätkä he monien tavaroiden ominaispiirteiden vuoksi ehkä pysty varastoimaan tuotantoaan pitempiä jaksoja saadakseen paremmat ostoehdot.

Komissio on luvannut esittää toimenpiteitä tilanteen korjaamiseksi, mutta toistaiseksi mitään esityksiä ei ole kuulunut. Nykyisen komission kausi lähestyy loppuaan. Aikooko komission jäsen Barnier pitää kiinni lupauksistaan? Miksi asia on kestänyt näin kauan? Mitä toimenpiteitä komissio tulee esittämään, joilla saadaan hyvän kauppatavan vastaiset käytännöt loppumaan?

Michel Barnier'n komission puolesta antama vastaus
(2. kesäkuuta 2014)

Joulukuussa 2012 pidetyssä elintarvikeketjun toiminnan parantamista käsittelevän korkean tason foorumin kokouksessa komissio ilmoitti tekevänsä vaikutustenarvioinnin, jossa analysoidaan useita vaihtoehtoja (myös lainsäädäntöä) hyvän kauppatavan vastaisten käytäntöjen torjumisessa. Hyvän kauppatavan vastaisten käytäntöjen esiintymisen ja niiden mahdollisten vaikutusten sekä niiden tarkoituksenmukaisimman käsittelytavan arviointi on nyt loppuvaiheessa. Vihreän kirjan kirvoittamien reaktioiden ja muiden todisteiden perusteella analyysi rajattiin koskemaan elintarvikeketjua, jossa hyvän kauppatavan vastaisia käytäntöjä näyttäisi esiintyvän erityisen paljon.

Samaan aikaan komissio seuraa, miten toimitusketjun hyvän kauppatavan vastaisiin käytäntöihin puuttumiseen keskittyvä elintarvikejalostuksen ja elintarvikekaupan alan sidosryhmien käynnistämä hyviä kauppatapoja koskeva vapaaehtoinen aloite edistyy. Komissio on kannustanut elintarvikkeiden toimitusketjun osallisia panemaan aloitteen täytäntöön viipymättä. Lisäksi komissiolle laadittiin oikeudellinen selvitys hyvän kauppatavan vastaisia käytäntöjä koskevista lainsäädännöllisistä toimista jäsenvaltioissa.

Komissio harkitsee, tarvitaanko alalla lisätoimenpiteitä. Joka tapauksessa mahdollisten toimenpiteiden tarkoituksena olisi täydentää ja vahvistaa vapaaehtoisia toimenpiteitä, joita tietyt elintarvikeketjun sidosryhmät ovat jo toteuttaneet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004539/14
to the Commission
Petri Sarvamaa (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food supply chain

In its Green Paper on unfair trading practices in the business-to-business food and non-food supply chain in Europe and in the public consultation which it held, the Commission stated that many dishonest practices occur in the food supply chain.

As the Green Paper indicates, an unbalanced situation in which fair trading practices are not adhered to may in practice force agricultural producers, for example, into a precarious position. Agricultural producers often have limited opportunities to choose who to sell their products to, and, because of the characteristics of many of their products, they do not have the option of storing them for any length of time in order to obtain better terms of sale.

The Commission has promised to propose measures to remedy the situation, but so far no such proposals have been forthcoming. The term of office of the current Commission is approaching its end. Will Commissioner Barnier keep his promises? Why has this matter dragged on for so long? What measures will the Commission propose in order to put an end to unfair trading practices?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

In December 2012, during the meeting of the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain, the Commission announced that it will carry out an impact assessment analysing various options (including legislation) for tackling unfair trading practices. The assessment of the occurrence and possible effects of unfair trading practices and the most appropriate way to address them is now in its final stage. Based on the responses to the Green Paper and other evidence, the analysis is limited to the food supply chain, where unfair trading practices seem to be particularly prominent.

At the same time, the Commission is monitoring the development of the Supply Chain Initiative, a voluntary framework created by stakeholder groups of the food processing and food trade sectors to address unfair trading practices in the supply chain. The Commission has encouraged food supply chain business partners to implement the framework without delay. In addition, a legal study was prepared for the Commission covering national legislative responses to unfair trading practices.

The Commission is reflecting on whether further measures may be necessary in this field. In any event, any possible measures would aim at complementing and reinforcing voluntary measures already taken by certain stakeholder groups in the food supply chain.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004540/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Attacco bomba in Pakistan

L'esplosione di una bomba in un mercato di Islamabad è costata la vita ad almeno ventitré persone, ferendone inoltre numerose decine. In un primo momento si è pensato a un attentato di matrice qaedista, ma i principali gruppi armati ne hanno preso le distanze e, anzi, hanno espresso solidarietà con le vittime della strage, condannando duramente l'attacco. Le forze di sicurezza non sono state ancora in grado di far luce sull'origine dell'attentato e non si hanno notizie certe sulle vittime e i feriti. A tale proposito, può la Commissione chiarire se tra questi ultimi vi siano cittadini europei?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(26 maggio 2014)

Non risulta che tra le vittime vi siano cittadini europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004540/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Bomb attack in Pakistan

The explosion of a bomb in an Islamabad market has killed at least 23 people and injured dozens of others. It was initially thought to be Al-Qaeda inspired, but the main armed groups have distanced themselves from the attack and have even voiced their solidarity with the victims, strongly condemning the massacre. The security forces are as yet unable to cast any light on the source of the attack, and there is no definite news concerning the dead and injured. Can the Commission clarify whether there are any European citizens among the victims?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

There have been no reports of any European citizens among the victims.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004541/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Aiuti umanitari per la ricostruzione delle Isole Salomone

Forti inondazioni hanno colpito le Isole Salomone, nell'oceano Pacifico, in seguito a diversi giorni di piogge torrenziali che hanno provocato lo straripamento di vari fiumi. L'ammontare dei danni è notevole e circa novemila persone hanno dovuto abbandonare le proprie abitazioni, mentre almeno ventitré persone hanno perso la vita. La capitale, Honiara, è stata dichiarata zona disastrata, così come l'intera isola maggiore di Guadalcanal. La situazione richiede estesi interventi internazionali di ricostruzione, come anche dichiarato dal presidente del Consiglio nazionale per i disastri, che ha appena lanciato un appello alla comunità internazionale.

1. Ha ricevuto la Commissione richieste d'aiuto dirette dal governo delle Isole Salomone?

2. Intende la Commissione sostenere gli sforzi di ricostruzione del paese insulare?

3. Se del caso, quali strumenti intende attivare?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

In seguito alle disastrose inondazioni del 3 e 4 aprile, il 5 aprile le Isole Salomone hanno chiesto assistenza a tutte le missioni accreditate e a tutte le organizzazioni internazionali e regionali. L'UE ha risposto erogando aiuti di emergenza pari a 240 000 EUR per la fornitura di impianti sanitari e prodotti per l'igiene tramite World Vision. In risposta alla richiesta presentata dal governo delle Isole Salomone all'UNOCHA il 14 aprile, l'UE ha fornito anche consulenze ambientali per individuare i rischi causati dall'aumento del livello delle acque e gli eventuali danni subiti dalla diga di ritenuta di Goldridge in seguito alle inondazioni e ai terremoti.

Insieme alla Banca mondiale, l'UE fornisce sostegno e partecipa a una valutazione delle necessità post-catastrofe che permetterà di individuare con precisione i danni e il fabbisogno di ricostruzione.

Attraverso il 10° FES l'UE sostiene il settore idrico-sanitario, che continuerà probabilmente ad essere prioritario anche nell'ambito dell'11° FES. Il sostegno in questo settore è fondamentale per aumentare la resilienza del paese alle catastrofi provocate dall'acqua, che aumenteranno probabilmente a causa dell'impatto negativo dei cambiamenti climatici.

In base alla valutazione delle necessità post-catastrofe e agli impegni degli altri donatori l'UE valuterà la possibilità di utilizzare le proprie risorse per la ricostruzione degli impianti idrici e sanitari gravemente danneggiati dalle inondazioni e di mobilitare risorse supplementari dalla dotazione B.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004541/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Humanitarian aid for the reconstruction of the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands in the Pacific Ocean have been hit by severe flooding following several days of torrential rain that caused a number of rivers to burst their banks. The damage is considerable and about 9 000 people have had to abandon their homes, while at least 23 people have lost their lives. The capital, Honiara, has been declared a disaster zone, as has the whole of the biggest island of Guadalcanal. The situation calls for extensive international aid with reconstruction, and the Chair of the National Disaster Council has recently launched an appeal to the international community.

1. Has the Commission received direct requests for aid from the Government of the Solomon Islands?

2. Is the Commission planning to support reconstruction efforts in the island state?

3. If so, what measures is it planning to take?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

Following the disastrous floods of 3-4 April, the Solomon Islands issued on the 5 April a request for emergency assistance to 'all accredited Missions, International and Regional Organisations'. The EU has responded with emergency aid of EUR 240 000 for sanitation facilities, and the delivery of hygiene kits, to be delivered through World Vision. In response to the Solomon Islands Government request to Unocha of 14 April, the EU has also provided environmental expertise to help identify risks caused by the rise in water levels and potential damage to the Goldridge tailing dam, following the floods and earthquakes.

Together with the World Bank the EU is providing support and participating to a Post Disaster Needs Assessment which will give a clear view of damage and needs for reconstruction.

Under EDF10 the EU provides support to the Water and Sanitation sector, which is most likely to remain the focal sector under EDF11. Support in this area is highly relevant to increase the country's resilience to weather related disasters. There is a likelihood that these will increase following the negative impact of Climate change.

Based on the findings of the PDNA and commitments from other donors, the EU will examine the possibility to use EU resources for the reconstruction of Water and Sanitation facilities badly damaged by the floods as well as consider the possibility of mobilising additional resources from the B-envelope.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004542/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Disparità salariale fra uomini e donne

Il presidente statunitense ha lanciato una campagna per la parità salariale tra uomo e donna negli USA, alla luce delle persistenti discriminazioni legate alle retribuzioni generalmente più basse percepite dalle donne o per discriminazione o perché occupano posizioni più basse e peggio retribuite. Nel contesto di questa campagna ha firmato due decreti tramite i quali intende vietare ai datori di lavoro pubblici o privati, che hanno commesse governative, di punire i dipendenti che parlano fra di loro delle rispettive retribuzioni e intende avviare degli studi nel governo federale sulle differenze di trattamento economico tra uomini e donne, per eliminarle.

Si tratta di un'iniziativa lodevole, che tocca un tema ampiamente discusso anche nell'UE, a livello sia nazionale che unionale: a proposito della discriminazione salariale di genere il Parlamento ha avuto modo di esprimersi a più riprese, consolidando una posizione che mira a colmare il divario che ancora separa i due sessi.

In merito a questa tematica, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. quali sono le principali fonti di diritto primario e derivato europeo che trattano la disparità salariale?

2. quali sono le principali misure ad oggi adottate dall'UE in materia?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

La parità di retribuzione tra donne e uomini, sancita all'articolo 157 del TFUE, è un principio fondamentale riconosciuto dal diritto dell'UE sin dal trattato di Roma. Il principale strumento giuridico che permette di combattere le discriminazioni retributive di genere è la direttiva 2006/54/CE ([1]), che vieta qualsiasi discriminazione basata sul sesso e concernente un qualunque aspetto o condizione retributiva per uno stesso lavoro o un lavoro di pari valore. Lo stesso principio vale per i sistemi di classificazione professionale in base ai quali vengono stabiliti i livelli salariali. Queste disposizioni devono essere recepite nell'ordinamento giuridico di tutti gli Stati membri.

La lotta contro le discriminazioni e le disparità retributive di genere è una priorità della Commissione prevista dalla strategia per la parità tra donne e uomini 2010-2015 ([2]): l'azione della Commissione mira, da un lato, a controllare e, se necessario, a far applicare correttamente a livello nazionale le disposizioni della direttiva 2006/54/CE sulla parità retributiva e, dall'altro, a sostenere gli Stati membri e le parti in causa in una corretta applicazione della normativa. La Commissione ha adottato a dicembre 2013 una relazione sull'applicazione della direttiva 2006/54/CE ([3]) e a marzo 2014 una raccomandazione sul potenziamento del principio della parità retributiva tra donne e uomini tramite la trasparenza ([4]). Per ulteriori dettagli si rimanda alle risposte alle interrogazioni E-003585/2014 e E-003082/2014.

Nel 2013, nel quadro del semestre europeo, la Commissione ha peraltro rivolto agli Stati membri raccomandazioni specifiche ([5]) sulle disparità salariali di genere e su questioni riguardanti alcune cause a monte del fenomeno. Tra le iniziative di sensibilizzazione del 2013 si segnala la Giornata europea per la parità retributiva ([6]); la Commissione ha dato inoltre attuazione al progetto «*Equality Pays Off*» ([7]) e ha agevolato scambi di buone pratiche.

([1]) Direttiva 2006/54/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, riguardante l'attuazione del principio delle pari opportunità e della parità di trattamento fra uomini e donne in materia di occupazione e impiego (rifusione), GU L 204 del 26.7.2006, pagg. 23-36.
([2]) COM(2010) 491 definitivo.
([3]) COM(2013) 861 final.disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0861:FIN:IT:PDF.
([4]) GU L 69 del 8.3.2014, pag. 112 disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014H0124&rid=1
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/
([6]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-165_it.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004542/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Pay inequality between men and women

The US President has launched a campaign for equal pay for men and women in the United States. His action is prompted by persistent discrimination, in the form of the generally lower remuneration received by women, either on grounds of their gender or because they hold lower, and therefore worse paid, positions. As part of the campaign, the President has signed two executive orders prohibiting federal contractors, in the public or private sectors, from retaliating against employees who discuss their salaries. He intends to launch studies by the federal administration on the differences in remuneration between men and women, with a view to eliminating these.

This praiseworthy initiative raises a subject also widely discussed at EU level and in the Member States. Parliament has made several statements on gender discrimination in pay, consolidating its position, which is that the gap between the sexes should be closed.

Can the Commission explain:

1. What are the main sources of primary and secondary European legislation dealing with pay inequality?

2. What are the main measures adopted by the EU in this matter to date?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The principle of equal pay for men and women has been a fundamental principle of law since the Treaty of Rome and is enshrined in Article 157 TFEU. The key legal instrument to fight gender-based pay discrimination is Directive 2006/54/EC ([1]) which stipulates that for the same work or for work of equal value, discrimination on grounds of sex with regard to all aspects and conditions of remuneration shall be eliminated. This principle also applies to job classification systems used for determining pay. These provisions have to be transposed into national legal systems of all Member States.

Tackling pay discrimination and the gender pay gap is one the Commission's priorities in its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 ([2]). In line with the strategy, the Commission focuses on monitoring and where necessary enforcing the correct implementation of the equal pay provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC at national level and supporting Member States and stakeholders with the proper implementation of these rules. The Commission adopted a Report on the application of Directive 2006/54/EC in December 2013 ([3]) and a recommendation on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency in March 2014 ([4]). The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to questions E-003585/2014 and E-003082/2014 for further details.

Moreover, in 2013 during the course of the European Semester the Commission addressed country specific recommendations ([5]) to Member States on the gender pay gap as well as issues relating to some of its root causes. As part of its awareness-raising initiatives the Commission held the European Equal Pay Day ([6]) and implemented the 'Equality Pays Off' ([7]) project as well as exchanges of good practice.

([1]) Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5.7.2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast); OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23-36.
([2]) COM(2010) 491 final.
([3]) COM(2013) 861 final, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0861:FIN:EN:PDF
([4]) OJ L 69, 8.3.2014, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:069:0112:0116:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/
([6]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-165_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004543/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Aumento dell'insicurezza in vista delle elezioni amministrative in Iraq

Una serie di attacchi terroristici ha spezzato altre diciannove vite in Iraq. Nelle stesse ore, le forze di sicurezza hanno respinto un attacco portato avanti da alcune decine di jihadisti sunniti contro una base militare situata nella zona sud di Baghdad, uccidendo venticinque assalitori, presumibilmente appartenenti al gruppo armato di al Qaeda dello «Stato Islamico dell'Iraq e del Levante». Le violenze nel paese vanno moltiplicandosi con l'avvicinarsi delle prossime elezioni amministrative, che si terranno il 30 aprile, al fine di disincentivare l'affluenza alle urne e mantenere un forte controllo psicologico sulla popolazione.

1. Dispone la Commissione di ulteriori dettagli in merito agli attentati e alla presenza eventuale di cittadini europei tra le vittime e i feriti?

2. La Commissione ha studiato e intende porre in essere misure di sostegno alle forze di sicurezza irachene per garantire il corretto e sicuro svolgimento delle elezioni e delle operazioni di spoglio?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è perfettamente al corrente della gravità della situazione della sicurezza in Iraq e ne segue da vicino gli sviluppi. L'UE non ha ricevuto informazioni in merito alla presenza di cittadini europei tra le vittime o i feriti degli attentati recenti a Baghdad o nel resto del paese.

L'UE ha sostenuto il processo elettorale organizzando una missione di esperti elettorali e finanziando l'osservazione locale delle elezioni. Le autorità irachene sono responsabili delle questioni di sicurezza e per le operazioni di spoglio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004543/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Increasing insecurity in the run-up to the administrative elections in Iraq

A series of terrorist attacks has led to the loss of a further 19 lives in Iraq, and the security forces have also repelled an attack by dozens of Sunni jihadists on a military base in the south of Baghdad, killing 25 of the attackers, presumed to be members of the armed Al-Qaeda group, 'the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant'. Violence in the country is increasing in the run-up to the forthcoming administrative elections on 30 April, the intention being to discourage people from voting and to keep firm psychological control of the population.

1. Does the Commission have any further information about the attacks and whether any European citizens are among the dead and injured?

2. Has the Commission considered, and does it intend to set in place, measures to support Iraq's security forces to ensure that the elections and the counting of votes are conducted safely and correctly?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The HR/VP is well aware of the deteriorating security situation in Iraq and follows it closely. The EU has not received any information on European citizens involved in recent attacks in Baghdad or in the rest of Iraq.

The EU has supported the election process through the organisation of an Election Expert Mission and funding to domestic observation. Responsibility for the security situation and for the whole electoral operations lies with the Iraqi authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004544/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Donna indiana morta carbonizzata come punizione inferta dal proprio marito

Un'associazione che si occupa di promozione e difesa dei diritti delle donne ha posto in rilievo un caso gravissimo avvenuto pochi giorni fa nel distretto di Johrat, nell'Assam, Stato federato del nord dell'India. Durante il tour di promozione di un famoso esponente politico indiano, quest'ultimo sarebbe stato baciato sulla guancia da una sua sostenitrice. Non appena la notizia di questo innocuo fatto è giunta al marito della donna, questi ha deciso di punire la propria moglie dandole fuoco. La donna non è sopravvissuta alle ustioni.

In merito a questo evento scioccante, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza del fatto in oggetto?

2. Intende esprimersi in merito, in difesa dei diritti delle donne che vengono sistematicamente violati nel grande paese asiatico?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente della morte di Bonti Chutiya in seguito a in incendio nella sua abitazione; le circostanze di questo decesso tragico, ma anche controverso, su cui la polizia locale sta indagando, devono ancora essere totalmente chiarite.

L'UE segue attentamente la situazione delle donne in India e già da tempo coinvolge le autorità indiane e la società civile nel dibattito sulla violenza e sulla discriminazione nei confronti delle donne e sulle questioni di genere. L'approccio dell'UE si basa su tre principi: la promozione dell'uguaglianza di genere e dell'emancipazione femminile; la lotta alle discriminazioni di genere e la violenza contro le donne e le bambine; la protezione e la promozione dei diritti dei minori, in particolare delle bambine. Questi sono temi centrali, fra l'altro, delle riunioni del regolare dialogo UE-India sui diritti umani, che costituisce la piattaforma più appropriata per discutere la questione con il paese. L'ultima di queste riunioni ha avuto luogo il 27 novembre 2013.

Le questioni legate alle donne sono parte integrante anche delle attività di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE: il benessere delle donne e delle bambine è al centro dei programmi in materia di istruzione e di sanità, mentre numerosi progetti hanno aiutato le organizzazioni della società civile ad affrontare questioni come la violenza contro le donne, compresi la tratta di minori, i matrimoni infantili, la violenza domestica e l'HIV/AIDS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004544/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Indian woman burned to death as punishment inflicted by her own husband

An organisation that promotes and defends women's rights has drawn attention to a very serious incident that took place a few days ago in the district of Johrat, in the federated state of Assam in north India. During a promotional tour by a prominent Indian politician, one of the politician's female supporters kissed him on the cheek. As soon as news of this innocent act reached the woman's husband, he decided to punish his wife by setting fire to her. The woman did not survive her injuries.

Can the Commission answer the following questions in respect of this shocking event:

1. Is the Commission aware of the incident?

2. Is it planning to make a statement in defence of women's rights, which are being systematically violated in India?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the death of Ms Bonti Chutiya in a fire in her house; full light still has to be shed on the circumstances of this tragic but also controversial death, which the local police is investigating.

The EU pays great attention to the situation of women in India and has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence, discrimination against women and gender issues. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, combating gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls. These topics features prominently *inter alia* in the meetings of the regular EU-India Human Rights Dialogue, which provides the most relevant platform to discuss this issue with India. The latest such meeting took place on 27 November 2013.

Women's issues are also mainstreamed into EU development cooperation activities: education and health-related programmes have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare, while numerous projects have helped civil society organisations to address issues such as violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004545/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Heartbleed — minaccia informatica

Alcuni ricercatori finlandesi hanno lanciato l'allarme riguardo a un bug chiamato *Heartbleed*, che potrebbe minare la sicurezza della rete. *Heartbleed* potrebbe portare alla più grande fuga di dati della storia di Internet, in quanto rende difettoso il sistema di garanzia di protezione delle informazioni sensibili, ad esempio nome utente, password, carta di credito, e-mail, foto e messaggi, di chiunque navighi sul web. Si tratta del sistema OpenSSL (simboleggiato dalla scritta «https» all'inizio di un indirizzo web), ovvero il software oggi utilizzato per la criptatura di due terzi dei server di tutto il mondo.

In merito alla situazione descritta, può la Commissione chiarire a quale genere di rischi vanno incontro i cittadini europei per quanto riguarda la sicurezza dei loro dati? È in grado di chiarire per quanto tempo i cittadini europei rischiano di essere esposti alla minaccia in oggetto?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

La Commissione ritiene che il virus Heartbleed rappresenti un rischio potenzialmente grave per la riservatezza dei dati dei cittadini su internet.

Il rischio più comune cui sono esposti i cittadini europei è il furto, da parte di un malintenzionato, della password per l'accesso a un sito internet vulnerabile agli attacchi del virus. Per questo motivo, come indicato negli orientamenti ([1]) pubblicati dall'Agenzia dell'Unione europea per la sicurezza delle reti e dell'informazione (ENISA), i cittadini dovrebbero prendere in considerazione la possibilità di cambiare la propria password se i siti visitati sono risultati vulnerabili.

L'ampia diffusione della notizia sulla stampa ha consentito l'adozione di misure correttive da parte della grande maggioranza dei servizi e dei siti internet, che continuano ad aggiornare i propri sistemi, rendendo così gli utenti sempre meno esposti alla minaccia rappresentata da Heartbleed. La Commissione sta seguendo da vicino la situazione mentre continuano gli sforzi per ripristinare la sicurezza della Rete.

Oltre alle iniziative intese a contrastare la minaccia immediata rappresentata da Heartbleed, la strategia europea per la sicurezza informatica ([2]) prevede azioni rivolte al settore delle TIC, che comprendono attività di ricerca per lo sviluppo di soluzioni informatiche affidabili e sicure, con l'intento di prevenire e limitare l'impatto negativo di minacce simili in futuro.

La proposta di direttiva ([3]) sulla sicurezza delle reti e dell'informazione è intesa a garantire che operatori del mercato, amministrazioni pubbliche e facilitatori di servizi internet gestiscano in modo adeguato i rischi per la cibersicurezza e che gli Stati membri collaborino nel rispondere alle minacce diffuse come Heartbleed. L'incidente ha evidenziato la crescente necessità di tale cooperazione a livello dell'UE.

([1]) https://www.enisa.europa.eu/media/news-items/heartbleed-bug-dont-panic-enisa-publishes-information-for-users
([2]) JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([3]) COM/2013/048 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004545/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Heartbleed — malware

Some Finnish researchers have raised the alarm concerning a virus known as Heartbleed, which could threaten Internet security. Heartbleed could lead to the biggest data leak in the history of the net, since it disables the system that protects web-users' sensitive information, such as user name, password, credit card details, emails, photos and messages. It is an OpenSSL system (indicated by 'https' at the beginning of a web address), which is the software currently used for encryption by two thirds of servers throughout the world.

With regard to this situation, can the Commission clarify the type of risks European citizens are facing as regards the security of their data? Can the Commission clarify how long European citizens will be at risk of being exposed to this malware?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission considers Heartbleed a potentially serious risk to the confidentiality of citizen's data on the Internet.

From the perspective of a European citizen, the most common risk is that a malicious actor may steal the citizen's password for an Internet site that was vulnerable to Heartbleed. For this reason, as indicated in the guidance ([1]) published by the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (Enisa), citizens should consider changing their passwords if the sites they visit were vulnerable.

The extensive publicity that Heartbleed received in the press led to remedial action by the vast majority of Internet sites and services. The exposure to the threat posed by Heartbleed is therefore in steady decline as Internet sites and services continue to update their systems. The Commission is closely monitoring the situation as recovery efforts continue.

Beyond the immediate threat posed by Heartbleed, the European Cyber Security Strategy ([2]) foresees actions geared towards the ICT industry, including research in the area of trustworthy and secure ICT, with the goal of preventing and limiting the negative impact of similar threats in the future.

The proposed Directive ([3]) on Network and Information Security would ensure that market operators, public administrations and Internet enablers manage cyber security risks appropriately and that Member States cooperate in responding to widespread threats such as Heartbleed. The incident has illustrated the increasing need for such EU-wide cooperation.

([1]) https://www.enisa.europa.eu/media/news-items/heartbleed-bug-dont-panic-enisa-publishes-information-for-users
([2]) JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([3]) COM/2013/048 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004546/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Istituzione di una commissione ad hoc per giudicare magistrati accusati di aver emesso sentenze politiche in Ucraina

La Verkhovna Rada, il parlamento ucraino, ha recentemente approvato una legge che prevede una nuova serie di sanzioni disciplinari, che includono anche la radiazione dall'ordine, per i giudici che siano accusati dai reduci della rivolta di piazza Maidan e poi condannati per aver emesso delle sentenze di matrice politica durante la presidenza dell'ex presidente ucraino. La nuova legge prevede che i magistrati vengano giudicati da una commissione temporanea costituita ad hoc, che sarà composta da quindici membri. Su un totale di 450 deputati, alla votazione era presente poco più della metà: 247 deputati, di cui la stragrande maggioranza (234) si è espressa a favore della nuova legge.

La difesa del diritto a un equo processo e a un giudice imparziale sono diritti fondamentali di ogni uomo ed è dunque importante che ogni illecito commesso in questo senso contro i cittadini ucraini debba essere perseguito secondo il diritto nazionale. Potrebbe tuttavia insorgere il rischio opposto, vale a dire che la legge in questione diventi uno strumento per punire uomini appartenenti al sistema istituzionale ucraino pre-crisi. In merito a tale rischio, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire se, nel dialogo con il nuovo governo ucraino, abbia esplorato debitamente il tema dei diritti legati alla giustizia, al fine di evitare condanne di natura politica anziché giudiziaria?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

L'UE e l'Ucraina hanno sottoscritto le disposizioni politiche dell'accordo di associazione il 21 marzo e stanno completando i negoziati sul programma europeo di riforma, nel cui ambito l'Unione sosterrà tutte le priorità di riforma dell'Ucraina. Riformare lo Stato di diritto è indispensabile in un paese dove da anni i cittadini nutrono scarsissima fiducia nella giustizia e nella polizia. È di fondamentale importanza ripristinare l'ordine pubblico e garantire l'efficienza e la trasparenza degli organi di contrasto e della magistratura, nonché il rispetto dei diritti umani. Il fenomeno della giustizia selettiva di stampo politico in Ucraina desta preoccupazione già da qualche tempo e le istituzioni pubbliche devono assolutamente svolgere un ruolo imparziale per far progredire la società. L'UE sostiene pertanto in via prioritaria la riforma dello Stato di diritto, esortando nel contempo le autorità ucraine a rispettare le norme elevate che si sono fissate. Qualsiasi normativa volta a riformare la giustizia deve essere in linea con le norme del Consiglio d'Europa e l'UE incoraggia vivamente l'Ucraina ad avvalersi delle competenze degli organi pertinenti di questa istituzione, tra cui la commissione di Venezia. Pur riconoscendo l'esigenza di avviare azioni giudiziarie in caso di assegnazione impropria di fondi pubblici o di violazioni dei diritti umani, l'UE ribadisce costantemente al governo ucraino la necessità di garantire processi trasparenti e imparziali. Le relazioni più strette auspicate sia dall'UE che dall'Ucraina si baseranno su una serie di valori condivisi tra cui la democrazia e lo Stato di diritto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004546/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Creation of an ad hoc commission to judge magistrates accused of issuing political sentences in Ukraine

The Ukrainian Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, has recently passed a law laying down a new set of disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal, for judges accused by survivors of the protests in Independence Square and later found guilty of having made politically motivated rulings during the presidency of the former Ukrainian President. The new law states that magistrates shall be judged by a temporary ad hoc commission comprising 15 members.

Of Ukraine's 450 Members of Parliament, a little more than half were present for the vote: 247 MPs, the vast majority of whom (234) voted in favour of the new law.

The rights to a fair trial and an impartial judge are fundamental human rights, and it is therefore important that any infringements of these rights with regard to Ukrainian citizens are pursued under national law. There is however a risk of a backlash effect, with this new law being used to punish people who were part of Ukraine's institutional system prior to the crisis. With regard to this possibility, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify whether her discussions with the new Ukrainian Government have included the issue of rights associated with justice, in order to prevent convictions of a political rather than a judicial nature?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

On 21 March, the EU and Ukraine signed the political provisions of the Association Agreement and are now finalising negotiations on the European Agenda for Reform, which matches the full range of Ukraine's reform priorities with EU support. In a country where public trust in the judiciary and police has been extremely low for years, no reform area is more important than rule of law. Restoring public order and ensuring that law-enforcement bodies and the judiciary are efficient and transparent, and respect human rights, are essential. Politically motivated, selective justice has been of concern in Ukraine for some time, and it is imperative that public institutions play an impartial role in Ukrainian society moving forward. The EU is therefore prioritising support for rule of law reforms while pressing Ukrainian authorities to live up to the high standards they have set for themselves. Any legislation reforming the judiciary must be in line with Council of Europe standards, and the EU strongly encourages Ukraine to draw on the expertise of the relevant Council of Europe bodies, including the Venice Commission. While recognising the need to pursue cases of misallocation of State funds or human rights abuses, the EU continues to underscore to the Ukrainian Government the need for a transparent, nonpartisan judicial process. Ultimately, the closer relationship that the EU and Ukraine both desire will be based on a set of shared values, including democracy and the rule of law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004547/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Modelli d'impresa che coniugano le risorse naturali con le eccellenze del territorio

Una società italiana che generalmente si occupa di progettazione e realizzazione di edifici ecologici e basso impatto energetico ha avviato un nuovo progetto che intende sfruttare le risorse naturali locali nel campo della moda, al fine di valorizzare prodotti e risorse naturali del territorio. Il progetto è partito con la produzione di una linea di occhiali da vista e da sole realizzati in legno certificato PEF. Ogni pezzo prodotto è geo-referenziato tramite un codice QR, tramite il quale l'acquirente può verificare la provenienza del legno utilizzato per costruire la montatura.

In merito a questo progetto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. È a conoscenza del progetto?

2. È a conoscenza di progetti simili, che possano rilanciare l'economia valorizzando tipicità locali (in questo caso i prodotti naturali del territorio e la consolidata esperienza italiana nel campo della moda), avviati in altri stati membri?

3. Ritiene che questo genere di progetti possa avere un ruolo significativo nel rilancio economico europeo?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che le imprese cercano spesso di diversificare e migliorare i loro prodotti e servizi facendo di frequente ricorso alle risorse, alle capacità artigianali o alla creatività locali. Questa iniziativa e iniziative affini possono contribuire a migliorare la competitività dell'industria europea.

La Commissione sostiene attivamente simili iniziative: avviato nel 2013 e finanziato a valere sul programma per la competitività e l'innovazione ([1]), il progetto pilota WORTH ([2]) si prefigge di accrescere la cooperazione tra le PMI manifatturiere e i designer per realizzare prodotti, servizi e soluzioni innovativi nelle industrie della moda. WORTH consentirà inoltre di mettere in relazione le imprese manifatturiere, i designer e gli artigiani di tutta l'UE per facilitare lo scambio e la diffusione di idee.

Il caso descritto dagli Onorevoli deputati è anche un esempio di come la creatività possa portare allo sviluppo di nuovi prodotti e modelli imprenditoriali. La Commissione sta esaminando attualmente gli effetti a cascata della creatività e delle industrie creative in altri settori dell'economia, comprese le industrie più tradizionali ([3]).

La Commissione sostiene inoltre l'innovazione e la diversificazione di prodotti e servizi attraverso i Fondi strutturali dell'UE. Ciò comporta lo sviluppo di ampie strategie di innovazione per la specializzazione intelligente al fine di massimizzare il potenziale innovativo delle regioni procedendo a una mappatura dei loro punti forti, delle loro capacità e del loro potenziale di crescita. Tra i policy mix necessari per attuare queste strategie vi sono, ad esempio, il finanziamento e la consulenza delle PMI per migliorare i loro prodotti e servizi in ambiti/industrie chiave nelle regioni. Il contributo della specializzazione intelligente per incrementare il potenziale di crescita legato all'innovazione nelle regioni europee è stato riconosciuto dal Consiglio Competitività e dal Consiglio europeo.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_it.htm
([2]) www.worth-project.eu
([3]) Un seminario si svolge il 13 maggio ed uno studio è previsto per il 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004547/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Business models that combine natural resources with regional specialities

An Italian business that usually focuses on the design and construction of ecological buildings with a low energy impact has launched a new scheme to make use of local natural resources in the fashion industry, as a way of enhancing the value of regional products and natural resources. The scheme has started with the production of a range of spectacles and sunglasses made of PEFC certified wood. Each pair of glasses manufactured is geo-referenced using a QR code, which enables the buyer to check the origin of the wood used to make the frame.

Can the Commission clarify the following with respect to this scheme:

1. Is the Commission aware of the scheme?

2. Is it aware of any similar schemes in other Member States that might revitalise the economy by enhancing the value of regional specialities (in this case, natural regional products and Italy's long experience in the fashion industry)?

3. Does it think this type of scheme could play a meaningful role in relaunching the European economy?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the fact that companies often seek to diversify and upgrade their products and services, often using local resources, crafts or creativity. This and similar initiatives can play a role in increasing the competitiveness of the European industry.

The Commission actively supports such efforts: launched in 2013 and financed from the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme ([1]), the WORTH Pilot Project ([2]) aims at enhancing cooperation between manufacturing SMEs and designers to come up with new innovative products, services and solutions in the fashion led-industries. WORTH will also allow linking manufacturing companies, designers and craftsmen across the EU to facilitate exchange and uptake of ideas.

The case described by the Honourable Member is also an example of how creativity can lead to the development of new products and business models. The Commission is currently exploring the spill-over effects of creativity and creative industries into other sectors of the economy, including more traditional industries ([3]).

The Commission is also supporting innovation and diversification of products and services through the EU Structural Funds. This involves developing comprehensive innovation strategies for smart specialisation to maximise the innovation potential of regions based on assessing their assets, capabilities and growth potential. Policy mixes to implement these strategies include e.g. funding and advice for SMEs to improve their products and services in key areas/industries of regional potential. The contribution of smart specialisation in enhancing the innovation-related growth potential of European regions has been recognised by the Competitiveness Council and the European Council.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_en.htm
([2]) www.worth-project.eu
([3]) A workshop is taking place on 13 May and a study is foreseen for 2015.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004548/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Proposta per un'agenzia di rating europea

La crisi finanziaria cominciata nel 2008 ha posto l'attenzione dei media sul ruolo giocato nell'economia mondiale dalle agenzie di rating e sulla loro capacità di influire, tramite i loro giudizi, sulla percezione che gli investitori hanno di una data economia. È evidente che non si tratta di organismi infallibili e che, al contrario, essi hanno spesso dimostrato di effettuare valutazioni molto distanti dalla realtà, come avvenuto nel caso di una grande multinazionale americana attiva nel settore dell'energia che, giudicata da due delle principali agenzie di rating al mondo come un investimento sicuro nel 2001, nello stesso anno dichiarò bancarotta.

Lo stesso Parlamento europeo ha discusso il ruolo e i limiti delle agenzie di rating, ma ora alcuni analisti suggeriscono la possibilità di istituire un'agenzia di rating europea; si tratta di una proposta avanzata anche dal penultimo governatore della BCE. L'agenzia avrebbe un ruolo importante nel porre fine all'opacità del funzionamento delle agenzie in questione, nell'eliminare il carattere oligopolistico percepito del settore finanziario e nell'evitare i costi legati ad azzardate valutazioni al ribasso delle economie degli Stati europei. In effetti già in passato la Commissione ha affermato di aver discusso la fattibilità della creazione di una fondazione europea di rating del credito e di un'agenzia europea di rating indipendenti, anche se poi ha ritenuto che la creazione di tali istituzioni, oltre a presentare problematiche in termini di credibilità e indipendenza, sarebbe risultata troppo onerosa.

1. A tale proposito, può la Commissione chiarire meglio quali sarebbero le problematiche riscontrabili in termini di indipendenza e credibilità?

2. Può specificare se in passato ha già preso in considerazione la creazione di agenzie di rating europee private?

Risposta data da Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta congiunta data alle interrogazioni scritte E-013762/2013, E- 013864/2013 e E-014079/2013. Dettagli sulle eventuali problematiche in termini di indipendenza e credibilità di un'agenzia di rating europea sono riportati nella sezione 6.3 e nell'allegato IX della valutazione di impatto a cui si fa riferimento nella suddetta risposta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004548/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Proposal for a European credit rating agency

Following the financial crisis that began in 2008, the media has focused much attention on the role played in the global economy by credit rating agencies, and how their opinions can influence the perception that investors have of a given economy. These organisations are clearly not infallible; on the contrary, they have often been known to make assessments that are a far cry from reality, with one example being a major American multinational that operated in the energy sector and was deemed to be a safe investment opportunity by two of the world's leading credit rating agencies in 2001, only to be declared bankrupt later that year.

The European Parliament has previously discussed the role played by credit rating agencies and their limitations, but now several analysts have suggested the idea of setting up a European credit rating agency, with a similar proposal also having been made by the previous President of the ECB. Such an agency would play an important part in removing the cloak of secrecy currently surrounding the operations of credit rating agencies and in ending the public's perception of the financial sector as an oligopoly, and would also help to avoid any financial damage arising from haphazard assessments of the decline of European States' economies. Indeed, the Commission has confirmed that it had previously discussed the feasibility of setting up an independent European credit rating foundation and an independent European credit rating agency, even though back then it found that such operations would be too costly and also pose a number of problems linked with credibility and independence.

1. In light of the above, can the Commission give a more precise indication of what these problems linked with credibility and independence would be?

2. Has it previously considered setting up private European credit rating agencies?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its joint answer to written questions E-013762/2013, E-013864/2013 and E-014079/2013. Details on possible credibility and independence issues of a European Credit Rating Agency are set out in Section 6.3 and Annex IX of the impact assessment referred to in that reply.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004549/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Utilizzo delle forze di polizia a statuto militare nell'ambito di operazioni dell'UE

Lo scorso 19 marzo è partito dall'Italia il primo scaglione di carabinieri istruttori diretti a Gerico per addestrare le Forze di Sicurezza Palestinesi (FSP) nell'ambito di un accordo bilaterale stipulato tra il Ministero della Difesa italiano e il Ministero dell'Interno palestinese. L'Arma dei Carabinieri si è impegnata a più riprese nell'addestramento di forze di sicurezza al fine di contribuire in maniera concreta agli sforzi internazionali di stabilizzazione dei paesi in situazioni disagiate, anche partecipando a organizzazioni internazionali di paesi dotati di forze di polizia a statuto militare, come ad esempio nel caso di EuroGendFor, partecipando attivamente a missioni di «capacity building».

Può la Commissione chiarire se, nell'ambito di missioni civili o militari dell'Unione europea, i carabinieri siano stati utilizzati, in concerto con altre forze di polizia a statuto militare di altri paesi membri, per operazioni di capacity building o assistenza alle forze di sicurezza locali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

Nell'ambito della PSDC, i carabinieri italiani sono stati impiegati in operazioni civili e militari di gestione delle crisi insieme con altre forze di polizia — a statuto militare o civile — principalmente per svolgere attività di formazione, monitoraggio, tutoraggio e consulenza.

In particolare, i carabinieri sono stati impiegati nelle missioni civili EUPOL (Congo), EUCAP (Sahel) e EUPM (Bosnia).

Attualmente l'Italia contribuisce alle nove missioni civili della PSDC. I carabinieri sono presenti nelle missioni EU BAM (Rafah), EUPOL (Afghanistan), EULEX (Kosovo) e EUMM (Georgia), nell'ambito del contingente nazionale.

Una nuova missione civile PSDC in Mali è in fase di pianificazione operativa. Il mandato prevede la fornitura di assistenza e consulenza alle forze di sicurezza interne per migliorarne l'efficienza operativa, ripristinare la catena di comando gerarchica e rafforzare il ruolo delle autorità giudiziarie e amministrative. Rappresenta la prima partecipazione di EUROGENDFOR a una missione civile PSDC.

Il processo di selezione del personale non è ancora stato definito. Di conseguenza, a tutt'oggi non è possibile confermare l'eventuale partecipazione dei carabinieri.

Per quanto riguarda le operazioni militari PSDC, attualmente i carabinieri sono impiegati nella missione UE di addestramento (EUTM) in Somalia.

Nell'ambito di EUROGENDFOR, i carabinieri hanno partecipato all'operazione militare EUFOR ALTHEA (da novembre 2007 a ottobre 2010). In Bosnia-Erzegovina, EUROGENDFOR ha contribuito, fra l'altro, a sostenere operazioni di lotta alla criminalità e l'addestramento della polizia locale al controllo della folla.

Attualmente è stata confermata la partecipazione di un'unità EUROGENDFOR — di 120 persone — all'operazione militare EUFOR RCA nella Repubblica centrafricana. A tutt'oggi non si prevede che i carabinieri vi prendano parte.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004549/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Use of police forces with military status in EU operations

On 19 March, the first group of instructors from the Carabinieri left Italy for Jericho to train the Palestinian National Security Forces (NSF), under a bilateral agreement signed by the Italian Defence Ministry and the Palestinian Interior Ministry. The Carabinieri have been involved several times in training security forces as a practical contribution to international efforts to stabilise countries in difficult situations, and have also been part of international organisations set up by countries with police forces with military status, such as EuroGendFor, playing an active role in 'capacity-building missions'.

Can the Commission clarify whether the Carabinieri have been used in the European Union's civil or military missions, together with police forces with military status from other Member States, for capacity-building operations or to assist local security forces?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Within CSDP, the Italian Carabinieri have been deployed in civilian and military crisis management operations alongside other Law Enforcement Agencies, with or without military status, mainly to perform tasks related to training, monitoring, mentoring and advising.

In particular, the Carabinieri were deployed in the following civilian missions: EUPOL Congo, EUCAP Sahel, and EUPM Bosnia.

Italy is currently contributing to the nine CSDP civilian missions. Within the national contingent, the Carabinieri are present in EU BAM Rafah, EUPOL Afghanistan, EULEX Kosovo and EUMM Georgia.

The operational planning of a new civilian CSDP mission in Mali is ongoing. The mandate foresees assisting and advising the Internal Security Forces to improve their operational efficiency, restore their hierarchical chain of command, and strengthen the role of the judicial and administrative authorities. It represents the first participation of Eurogendfor in a CSDP civilian mission.

The personnel recruitment process is not yet established. As a result, any participation of the Carabinieri cannot be yet confirmed.

As for CSDP military operations, the Carabinieri are currently deployed in the EU Training Mission (EUTM) in Somalia.

Within Eurogendfor, the Carabinieri have participated in the military operation EUFOR Althea (11/2007 to 10/2010). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eurogendfor contributed i.a. to supporting crime-fighting operations and training local police in crowd control.

The participation of a Eurogendfor unit -strength 120 personnel- is currently confirmed in the military operation EUFOR RCA in Central African Republic. For the time being, the involvement of the Carabinieri is not foreseen.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004550/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Investiții în cercetarea medicala — Ebola

Uniunea Europeană, alături de alte state și regiuni importante ale lumii, alocă anual sume importante domeniului cercetării, inclusiv domeniului cercetării medicale. Cu toate acestea, nu s-au găsit încă tratamente sau vaccinuri eficiente împotriva unor boli precum ebola, care produc importante pierderi de vieți, în special pe continentul african.

Având în vedere aria relativ extinsă în care au fost semnalate, în ultimele săptămâni, numeroase cazuri de infectare cu virusul ebola și faptul că acest virus omoară peste 9 din 10 persoane infectate, aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă intenționează să aloce sau să suplimenteze sumele alocate cercetării medicale, în special pentru descoperirea unor tratamente sau vaccinuri eficiente împotriva ebola?

Răspuns dat de dna Geoghegan-Quinn în numele Comisiei
(2 iunie 2014)

În cadrul PC7 ([1]), UE finanțează o serie de proiecte privind epidemiile emergente, care contribuie la îmbunătățirea cunoștințelor privind diferite aspecte ale Ebola. Proiectul ANTIGONE ([2]) studiază virusuri zoonotice (inclusiv virusul Ebola) și bacterii în scopul de a identifica factorii principali care fac ca agenții patogenii zoonotici cu potențial pandemic uman să fie susceptibili să treacă de bariera dintre specii, să se adapteze la gazdele umane și să se răspândească de la om la om. Proiectul CCH Fever ([3]) (denumită, de asemenea, „Ebola europeană") vizează să îmbunătățească cunoștințele în legătură cu febra hemoragica de Crimeea — Congo în ceea ce privește diagnosticul, măsurile de control integrate, epidemiologia, biologia, patogeneza, dezvoltarea de vaccinuri și terapii. Proiectul PREPARE ([4]) vizează să dezvolte soluții preventive în ceea ce privește blocajele etice, administrative, de reglementare și logistice care împiedică un răspuns rapid la amenințările noi.

Unele proiecte ([5]) includ dispoziții de flexibilitate în acordul de finanțare, care prevăd că, în cazul unei epidemii semnificative, proiectul trebuie să își folosească propriile resurse pentru cercetările clinice de urgență privind acest focar. Până în prezent, această dispoziție nu a fost invocată în cazul focarului de Ebola.

În decembrie 2013, în cadrul programului Orizont 2020 ([6]), a fost publicată o cerere de propuneri pentru a furniza sprijin organizațional pentru implementarea *Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness* ([7]) (Colaborarea cercetătorilor la nivel mondial pentru pregătirea în ceea ce privește bolile infecțioase).

Una dintre societățile mari lucrează la un vaccin împotriva Ebola și dorește să colaboreze cu Comisia, OMS ([8]), EMA ([9]) și BARDA ([10]) pentru a accelera elaborarea vaccinului. Comisia discută în prezent programul de lucru pentru 2016-2017 din cadrul Orizont 2020 și sunt luate în considerare viitoare cereri de propuneri cu privire la cercetarea în domeniul bolilor infecțioase.

([1]) Al șaptelea program-cadru pentru activități de cercetare, de dezvoltare tehnologică și demonstrative (PC7, 2007-2013) — http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm
([2]) ANTIGONE („Anticipating the global Onset of Novel Epidemics") — www.antigonefp7.eu.
([3]) CCH Fever („Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever") — http://www.cch-fever.eu
([4]) PREPARE („Platform foR European Preparedness Against (Re-)emerging Epidemics") — http://www.prepare-europe.eu/Portals/0/Documents/PREPARE%20one%20pager_2.pdf
([5]) ANTIGONE și PREPARE.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020
([7]) O rețea de organizații și organisme de finanțare menite să inițieze un răspuns eficient prin cercetare în termen de 48 ore de la apariția unui focar al unei epidemii importante noi sau reemergente.
([8]) Organizația Mondială a Sănătății.
([9]) Agenția Europeană pentru Medicamente.
([10]) Autoritatea pentru cercetare și dezvoltare biomedicală avansată din cadrul Oficiului Secretarului adjunct pentru pregătire și reacție din cadrul Departamentului SUA pentru sănătate și servicii sociale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004550/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Investment in medical research — Ebola

Like other major countries and regions around the world, the European Union allocates significant sums every year to research, including medical research. Nevertheless, no effective treatments or vaccinations have yet been discovered to combat a number of diseases such as Ebola which cause significant mortality, particularly in Africa.

Given the relatively wide area in which a large number of cases of Ebola infection have been detected in recent weeks, and bearing in mind that this virus kills up to nine out of every 10 people infected, will the Commission allocate new sums or top up existing sums for medical research, in particular research aimed at discovering effective treatments or vaccinations against Ebola?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

Under FP7 ([1]), the EU is funding a number of projects on emerging epidemics, which are contributing to improving knowledge on different aspects of Ebola. The Antigone ([2]) project studies zoonotic viruses (including the Ebola virus) and bacteria with the aim of identifying key factors that makes zoonotic pathogens with human pandemic potential prone to cross the species barriers adapt to human hosts and gain human to human transmissibility. The CCH Fever ([3]) (also called 'European Ebola') project aims to improve knowledge on Crimean Congo Haemorrhagic fever with respect to diagnostics, integrated control measures, epidemiology, biology, pathogenesis, vaccine development and therapeutics. The Prepare ([4]) project aims to develop pre-emptive solutions to ethical, administrative, regulatory and logistical bottlenecks that prevent a rapid response to new threats.

Some projects ([5]) include flexibility provisions in the grant agreement that stipulate that in the case of a significant outbreak, the project has to use its resources for clinical emergency research on this outbreak. So far, this provision has not been invoked for the Ebola outbreak.

Under Horizon 2020 ([6]), a call for proposals has been published in December 2013 to provide organisational support for the implementation of the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness ([7]).

A large company is working on a vaccine against Ebola and is looking for collaboration with the Commission, WHO ([8]), EMA ([9]) and BARDA ([10]) to accelerate vaccine development. The Commission is currently discussing the Horizon 2020 Work Programme for 2016 and 2017 and future calls on infectious diseases research are being considered.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) — http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/index_en.cfm
([2]) Antigone ('Anticipating the global Onset of Novel Epidemics') — www.antigonefp7.eu
([3]) CCH Fever ('Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever') — http://www.cch-fever.eu
([4]) Prepare ('Platform foR European Preparedness Against (Re-)emerging Epidemics') — http://www.prepare-europe.eu/Portals/0/Documents/PREPARE%20one%20pager_2.pdf
([5]) Antigone and Prepare.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020
([7]) A network of funding organisations and bodies aiming to start an effective research response within 48 hours of a significant outbreak of a new or re-emerging epidemic.
([8]) World Health Organisation.
([9]) European Medicines Agency.
([10]) The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004551/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Investiții în cercetarea medicală — Malarie

Uniunea Europeană, alături de alte state și regiuni importante ale lumii, alocă anual sume importante domeniului cercetării, inclusiv domeniului cercetării medicale. Cu toate acestea, nu s-au găsit încă tratamente sau vaccinuri eficiente împotriva unor boli precum malaria, care produc importante pierderi de vieți, în special pe continentul african.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă intenționează să aloce sau să suplimenteze sumele alocate cercetării medicale, în special pentru descoperirea unor tratamente sau vaccinuri eficiente împotriva malariei?

Răspuns dat de dna Geoghegan-Quinn în numele Comisiei
(28 mai 2014)

Comisia este conștientă de importanța combaterii bolilor care provoacă un nivel ridicat de mortalitate și de nevoia de a descoperi vaccinuri împotriva acestora și tratamente pentru acestea. Din aceste motive, Uniunea Europeană sprijină cercetarea în acest domeniu.

În ceea ce privește cercetările privind malaria, începând din 2002, UE a finanțat 44 proiecte de cercetare, care au implicat o contribuție financiară a UE de peste 145 de milioane EUR, în cadrul celui de-al șaselea și al șaptelea program-cadru pentru cercetare, dezvoltare tehnologică și activități demonstrative (PC 6 (2002-2006) și PC 7 (PC 7, 2007-2013). Aceste cercetări au condus, printre altele, la elaborarea unor noi metode de diagnostic, la obținerea unor progrese importante în ceea ce privește elaborarea mai multor vaccinuri experimentale noi pentru malarie, la descoperirea unor noi potențiale medicamente și la sprijinirea consolidării capacităților privind cercetarea în țările endemice, contribuind la controlul malariei la nivel global și la obiectivul final de eradicare a acesteia.

În această perioadă, alte 41 de granturi, care implică sprijin financiar în valoare de aproape 50 de milioane EUR, au fost acordate trialurilor clinice privind noi tratamente îmbunătățite pentru malarie, unor noi vaccinuri experimentale împotriva malariei și activităților de consolidare a capacităților conexe, prin intermediul Programului de Parteneriat între țări europene și țări în curs de dezvoltare privind trialurile clinice (EDCTP) ([1]). Rezultatele unuia dintre trialurile clinice au sprijinit recomandările OMS în ceea ce privește un nou tratament pentru combaterea malariei la copii.

Această cercetare va rămâne o prioritate în cadrul programului Orizont 2020 (2014-2020). Recent, Parlamentul European și Consiliul au adoptat, de asemenea, o propunere privind participarea Uniunii în cadrul unui al doilea program EDCTP (EDCTP 2). 683 de milioane EUR vor fi puse la dispoziție pentru trialurile clinice privind intervenții medicale noi sau îmbunătățite în ceea ce privește bolile asociate sărăciei, inclusiv malaria.

([1]) http://www.edctp.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004551/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Investment in medical research — malaria

Like other major countries and regions around the world, the European Union allocates significant sums every year to research, including medical research. Nevertheless, no effective treatments or vaccinations have yet been discovered to combat a number of diseases such as malaria which cause significant mortality, particularly in Africa.

Will the Commission allocate new sums or top up existing sums for medical research, in particular research aimed at discovering effective treatments or vaccinations against malaria?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the importance of fighting diseases causing high mortality and of the need to discover effective vaccinations against and treatments for them. For these reasons, the EU supports research in this area.

As for malaria research, since 2002, the EU has funded 44 research projects, involving an EU financial contribution of more than EUR 145 million, during the Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP6 (2002-2006) and FP7 (FP7, 2007-2013)). This research has among others led to the development of new diagnostic methods, moved forward the pipeline of several new malaria vaccine candidates, discovered new efficient drug candidates, and support to research capacity building in endemic countries, contributing to the malaria control at global level and to the ultimate goal of its eradication.

During this period, a further 41 grants, involving financial support amounting to nearly EUR 50 million, were made to clinical trials on improved malaria treatments, new malaria vaccine candidates and related capacity building activities, through the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) ([1]). The results from one of the clinical trials supported the WHO recommendations of a new treatment for fighting malaria in children.

This research will remain a priority in Horizon 2020 (2014-2020). Recently the European Parliament and the Council have also adopted a proposal on the participation of the Union in a second EDCTP Programme (EDCTP2). EUR 683 million will be made available for clinical trials on new or improved medical intervention for poverty related diseases including malaria.

([1]) http://www.edctp.org/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004552/14
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11. April 2014)

Betrifft: Die Schlussfolgerungen des Berichts über den Flugunfall von Cork und das Geschäftsmodell von Norwegian Air International

Im Januar 2014 veröffentlichte die irische Behörde für die Untersuchung von Flugunfällen (Air Accident Investigation Unit — AAIU) ihren Untersuchungsbericht über den Flugunfall auf dem Flughafen von Cork im Jahre 2011, bei dem Todesopfer zu beklagen waren. In ihm wird unter anderem auf die intransparente Geschäftsorganisation des Flugbetriebs und die fehlende Überwachung durch den Betreiber und die nationalen Behörden aufmerksam gemacht.

Die Fluggesellschaft Norwegian Air Shuttle gründet gegenwärtig eine neue Tochtergesellschaft namens Norwegian Air International (NAI), deren Geschäftsmodell ebenso komplex, länderübergreifend und intransparent ist und in dessen Rahmen kein Flugbetrieb im Ausstellerland des Luftverkehrbetreiberzeugnisses (air operator's certificate — AOC) geplant ist. Außerdem wird das Flugpersonal in Asien eingestellt, ist jedoch in Europa stationiert. Im Januar 2014 begrüßte die GD MOVE dieses Geschäftsmodell und ersuchte die USA, NAI Zugang zum US-Markt zu gewähren.

1. Sind die Ergebnisse des Berichts der AAIU von Relevanz für die geschäftliche, betriebliche und vertragliche Organisation von NAI? Wenn ja, inwieweit?

2. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um Schlupflöcher in Bezug auf Sicherheit und Überwachung zu vermeiden, die denen ähneln, die zu dem Flugunfall von Cork geführt haben?

3. Hält es die Kommission für akzeptabel, dass für Flugpersonal „fingierte" Heimatbasen in Asien angegeben werden?

4. Welche Planungen bestehen, um den Mitgliedstaaten die Erhebung von Sozialversicherungsabgaben und Steuern zu ermöglichen?

5. Inwieweit wird, in Anbetracht der Erfahrungen aus dem Seeverkehr, durch solche Geschäftsmodelle ein EU-Luftverkehrsmarkt gefördert, auf dem die Betreiber Betriebsgenehmigungen und AOC nach ihrem Gutdünken in „Billigflaggenländer" auslagern, um die strikteren Sozial-, Arbeits- und Steuergesetze ihrer Niederlassungsländer zu umgehen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2014)

1. Der Kommission liegen keine Anhaltspunkte dafür vor, dass die Erkenntnisse der irischen Behörde für die Untersuchung von Flugunfällen (AAIU) ([1]) für die geschäftliche, betriebliche oder vertragliche Organisation von NAI ([2]) relevant sind.

2. Dem Bericht der irischen AAIU zufolge ist die wahrscheinliche Unfallursache ein „Kontrollverlust während des Versuchs, unterhalb der Entscheidungshöhe unter Instrumentenwetterbedingungen durchzustarten". Zu dem Unfall haben zudem insgesamt neun Faktoren beigetragen, von denen nur einer die Fernaufsicht über den Flugbetrieb betraf. Die Kommission beabsichtigt, die Lehren aus diesem Unfall zu nutzen, um die Flugsicherheit weiter zu verbessern, insbesondere durch Förderung und Verbreitung von „kooperativen Aufsichtsvereinbarungen". Dieses Konzept wurde auf der Grundlage des Artikels 10 der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 216/2008 ([3]) in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 965/2012 ([4]) über den Flugbetrieb weiterentwickelt.

3. Der Kommission liegen keine Nachweise für eine solche Praxis vor ([5]).

([1]) Air Accident Investigation Unit.
([2]) Norwegian Air International.
([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 216/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 20. Februar 2008 zur Festlegung gemeinsamer Vorschriften für die Zivilluftfahrt und zur Errichtung einer Europäischen Agentur für Flugsicherheit, zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 91/670/EWG des Rates, der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1592/2002 und der Richtlinie 2004/36/EG (ABl. L 79 vom 19.3.2008, S. 11).
([4]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 965/2012 der Kommission vom 5. Oktober 2012 zur Festlegung technischer Vorschriften und von Verwaltungsverfahren in Bezug auf den Flugbetrieb gemäß der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 216/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates (ABl. L 296 vom 25.10.2012, S. 16) (ARO.GEN.300 (e)).
([5]) Siehe auch die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-002583/2014 unter: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html

4. Gemäß der Verordnung 465/2012/EU werden die Sozialbeiträge der Flug- oder Kabinenbesatzungsmitglieder sowie die entsprechenden Leistungen in dem Mitgliedstaat gezahlt, in dem sich ihre Heimatbasis befindet, d. h. in dem Land, in dem sie ihrer Tätigkeit nachgehen ([6]). Es gibt keine EU-Rechtsvorschriften über die Besteuerung der Einkommen einzelner Steuerzahler (wie Flug- und Kabinenbesatzungsmitglieder). Die behördliche Zusammenarbeit ermöglicht es den Mitgliedstaaten, die fälligen Steuern wirksam festzusetzen und zu erheben. Nach der Richtlinie 2011/16/EU ([7]) des Rates sind die zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten ab dem 1. Januar 2015 zu einem automatischen Austausch von Informationen über die Vergütung aus unselbstständiger Arbeit verpflichtet.

5. NAI erhielt am 12. Februar 2014 in Irland eine Betriebsgenehmigung und ein Luftverkehrsbetreiberzeugnis. Der Kommission liegen keine Hinweise auf einen Verstoß gegen die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 ([8]) vor. Die Aufsicht Irlands über die Flugsicherheit und Flugtüchtigkeit entspricht den anwendbaren ICAO- und EU-Normen.

([6]) Gemäß der Definition in Anhang III der Verordnung (EWG) Nr. 3922/91 des Rates, ABl. L 373 vom 31.12.1991, S. 4.

([7]) Richtlinie 2011/16/EU des Rates vom 15. Februar 2011 über die Zusammenarbeit der Verwaltungsbehörden im Bereich der Besteuerung und zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 77/799/EWG (ABl. L 64 vom 11.3.2011, S. 1).

([8]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1008/2008 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. September 2008 über gemeinsame Vorschriften für die Durchführung von Luftverkehrsdiensten in der Gemeinschaft (ABl. L 293 vom 31.10.2008, S. 3).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004552/14
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Cork accident report conclusions versus business model of Norwegian Air International

In January 2014, Ireland's Air Accident Investigation Unit issued its investigation report on the 2011 fatal air accident at Cork airport. Among other things, it draws attention to the non-transparent business set-up of the operation and to the lack of effective oversight by the operator and national authorities.

Norwegian Air Shuttle is currently setting up a new affiliate, Norwegian Air International (NAI), based on an equally complex, transnational and non-transparent business model, with no operations planned in the country issuing the air operator certificate (AOC). Moreover, air crews are hired in Asia but reside in Europe. In January 2014, DG MOVE welcomed this business model and asked the USA to grant NAI access to the US market.

Against this background, can the Commission reply to the following:

1. Are the AAIU report's findings relevant to NAI's business, operational and contractual set-up, and if so, to what extent?

2. What does the Commission plan to do to prevent similar safety and oversight loopholes to those that contributed to the Cork accident?

3. Does the Commission find it acceptable that air crews are given 'fake' home bases in Asia?

4. What is planned in order to enable Member States to collect social security payments and taxes?

5. Given the experiences of the maritime sector, to what extent do such business models support an EU aviation market in which operators freely relocate operating licences/AOCs to 'flags of convenience' with the aim of avoiding stricter social, labour and tax regulations in their home country?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. The Commission has no element in its possession that would allow to conclude that the findings of the Irish AAIU ([1]) are relevant to NAI ([2]) business, operational and contractual set-up.

2. According to the Irish AAIU's report, the probable cause of the accident was a 'loss of control during an attempted go-around below Decision Height in Instrument Meteorological Conditions. ' There were also nine contributory causes, one referring to the oversight of the remote operation. The Commission intends to use the lessons learned from this accident to further improve aviation safety, in particular by stimulating and promoting the concept of 'cooperative oversight arrangements'. Based on Article 10 of Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 ([3]), this concept has been further developed in Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 ([4]) on air operations.

3. The Commission has not received evidence of any such practice ([5]).

4. According to Regulation 465/2012/EU, air crews' social security contributions and entitlements are due in the Member State where their home base is located, i.e. in the country where their activity is pursued ([6]). There is no EU legislation on taxation of income of individual taxpayers (including air crews). Administrative cooperation enables Member States to effectively assess and collect the taxes due. Council Directive 2011/16/EU ([7]) provides for mandatory automatic exchange of available information on income from employment between Member States' competent authorities from 1 January 2015.

([1]) Air Accident Investigation Unit.
([2]) Norwegian Air International.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20.2.2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC (Text with EEA relevance) (OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, p. 11).
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5.10.2012 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 296, 25.10.2012, p.16) (ARO.GEN.300 (e)).
([5]) See also reply to parliamentary Question E-002583/2014 available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([6]) as defined in Annex III to Council Regulation (EEC) No 3922/91, Official Journal L 373 , 31.12.1991 p.4-8.
([7]) Council Directive 2011/16/EU of 15.2.2011 on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation and repealing Directive 77/799/EEC (OJ L 64, 11.3.2011, p. 1).

5. On 12 February 2014 NAI was granted a licence and AOC in Ireland. The Commission has no element in its possession that would allow to conclude that regulation 1008/2008 ([8]) was not complied with. Ireland's safety and fitness oversight meets applicable ICAO and EU standards.

([8]) Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.9.2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community (Text with EEA relevance) (OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004553/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Due funzionari ONU assassinati in Somalia

Un attentatore travestito da poliziotto ha assassinato due funzionari dell'UNODC, l'Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite per il controllo della droga e la prevenzione del crimine, a Galkayo, in Somalia. Al Shabaab ha plaudito all'attacco, pur non rivendicandolo direttamente e ha incoraggiato la popolazione ad attaccare gli stranieri. Già nel giugno 2013 il gruppo aveva commesso un attentato suicida contro un compound delle Nazioni unite, provocando la morte di quindici persone, ma l'attacco in oggetto non è invece avvenuto in un'area in cui Al Shabaab è generalmente attivo.

Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante fornire ulteriori dettagli sugli attacchi in questione e chiarire se le vittime fossero cittadini europei?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

I due funzionari internazionali dell'UNODC (Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite per il controllo della droga e la prevenzione del crimine) assassinati il 7 aprile nel Puntland da un addetto alla sicurezza aeroportuale erano entrambi cittadini europei (del Regno Unito e della Francia). Lavoravano come consulenti presso l'ufficio regionale dell'UNODC in Kenya e si recavano regolarmente in Somalia per fornire assistenza tecnica e rafforzare le capacità al fine di contrastare i flussi illeciti di capitali legati alla pirateria.

Sebbene le fonti rivelino che l'autore dell'omicidio sia mentalmente instabile, l'attacco è coinciso, e quindi potrebbe essere connesso, con la prima visita ufficiale del nuovo Presidente del Puntland nella Regione del Mudug, il quale cercava di procurarsi il sostegno dei clan locali per stabilizzare il Puntland. Galkayo è tradizionalmente un centro di pirateria e il porto della città avrebbe la capacità di produrre un reddito significativo nella regione se fosse controllata dal governo del Puntland. I signori della pirateria hanno quindi interesse a mantenere l'instabilità, anziché l'ordine, nella regione. Inoltre, il Puntland ha urgentemente bisogno di una ristrutturazione delle forze di sicurezza.

Sheikh Mohamud Ali Raghe, portavoce di Al-Shabaab, ha infatti plaudito all'attacco, pur non rivendicandolo direttamente, e ha cercato di istigare altre uccisioni di stranieri in Somalia. Ma il governo federale somalo, il Puntland e l'intera comunità internazionale hanno condannato l'incidente che ha rafforzato, anziché indebolire, la volontà collettiva di contrastare le reti della pirateria e Al-Shabaab, e di stabilizzare il paese. In seguito il presidente del Puntland ha nominato un comitato di alto livello incaricato di indagare sull'attacco e si è impegnato a consegnare alla giustizia i responsabili.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004553/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Two UN officials assassinated in Somalia

An assailant disguised as a policeman has killed two officials from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Galkayo, Somalia. Al-Shabaab has celebrated the attack, though without directly claiming responsibility for it, and the group has encouraged Somalis to attack foreigners. In June 2013, it was behind a suicide attack on a UN compound which left 15 people dead, but this latest attack did not take place in an area in which al-Shabaab is usually active.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative provide any further information on the attack in question, and clarify whether the victims were European citizens?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The two international UNODC staff murdered on 7 April in Puntland by an airport security staff were both European citizens (from the UK and France). Both were consultants based at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)'s regional office in Kenya, and regularly visited Somalia to provide technical support and build capacities to tackle illicit flows of funds in relation to piracy.

While sources indicate that the perpetrator was mentally unstable, the attack coincided with and thus may have been linked to the new President of Puntland's first official visit of the Mudug region, who was seeking support from local clans to stabilise Puntland. Galkayo has traditionally been a piracy hub and its port has the potential to bring significant income to Puntland if controlled by the Puntland administration. Piracy kingpins therefore have an interest in maintaining instability, rather than order, in the region. Further, Puntland urgently needs restructuring of its security forces.

Al-Shabaab spokesman Sheikh Ali Mohamud Raghe indeed welcomed the attack, whilst not claiming responsibility for it, and sought to incite further killings of internationals in Somalia. But the Somali Federal Government, Puntland and the entire international community deplored the incident which reinforced, rather than weakened, the collective resolve to fight piracy networks and Al-Shabaab and to stabilise Somalia. The President of Puntland has since appointed a high level committee to investigate theincident and has committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004554/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Richiesta di secessione del distretto di Shumayachi dalla Federazione russa

Già in altre interrogazioni parlamentari l'interrogante ha voluto sollevare il delicato tema di un potenziale effetto domino scatenato dal referendum per l'indipendenza della Crimea e la sua annessione alla Federazione russa e in effetti in altre regioni ucraine vi sono dei movimenti di protesta filorussi. È accaduto però di recente che la popolazione bielorussa della regione russa di Smolensk ha chiesto al governo di Mosca la cessione del distretto di Shumayachi alla Bielorussia, dal momento che è popolato da una maggioranza bielorussa e che è storicamente collegata alla «Russia bianca». Pare che gli attivisti stiano completando una raccolta firme online, in cui si afferma che il passaggio, avvenuto nel 1939, dalla Bielorussia all'Urss, è illegale.

In merito a questa raccolta firme, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza dei fatti?

2. È a conoscenza di eventuali commenti all'iniziativa da parte dei governi russo e bielorusso?

3. Ha avuto modo di contattare le autorità bielorusse e russe per discutere la questione?

4. Ha avuto modo di discutere della petizione con i ministri degli Esteri degli Stati membri UE?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

L'AR/VP e la Commissione sono al corrente della petizione relativa a una proposta di cessione di una parte del territorio russo. A quanto risulta sarebbero state raccolte 700 firme in favore della petizione, ma le informazioni disponibili, anche tramite la stampa, sono scarsissime. L'UE non è a conoscenza di eventuali reazioni delle autorità bielorusse o russe. La questione non è stata discussa né con le suddette autorità né con gli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004554/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Request for secession of the district of Shumayachi from the Russian Federation

I have already in previous parliamentary questions raised the delicate issue of a potential domino effect being triggered by Crimea's independence referendum and its annexation to the Russian Federation, and we are indeed seeing pro-Russian protest movements in other regions of Ukraine. Recently, however, the Belarusian population of the Russian region of Smolensk have called on the government in Moscow to cede the district of Shumayachi to Belarus, because most of its population is Belarusian and it has historically been linked to 'White Russia'. Activists are apparently organising an online petition, claiming that the 1939 transfer of the district from Belarus to the USSR was illegal.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions concerning this petition:

1. Is she aware of the facts?

2. Is she aware of any comments on the petition by the Russian and Belarusian governments?

3. Has she had an opportunity to contact the Belarusian and Russian authorities to discuss the matter?

4. Has she had an opportunity to discuss the petition with the foreign ministers of the EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The HR/VP and the Commission are aware of this petition about a proposal to cede a piece of land from Russia. Reportedly this petition has received 700 signatures, and information about it, even in the press, was limited. The EU is not aware of any reaction from the authorities of either Belarus or Russia. The issue has not been discussed with either of the two countries' authorities or with the EU Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004556/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Blind and partially sighted people in the EU

A significant number of European citizens are or will be affected by sight loss. The World Health Organisation estimated in 2010 that across Europe there are 2 550 000 blind people and 23 800 000 partially sighted people, giving a total of 26 350 000 visually impaired individuals. The European Blind Union suggests an estimate of 30 000 000 visually impaired individuals. This higher figure takes into account the prevalence of sight loss amongst an increasing population of elderly people in Europe, which is extremely difficult to accurately quantify, and also the fact that a number of people who suffer from varying degrees of sight loss either ignore this or decide for personal reasons not to declare their condition.

Is the Commission aware of the numbers of blind and partially sighted people across the EU by country and, given the importance of policy being underpinned by up-to-date information, does it currently offer or intend to propose any guidelines to Member States on the frequency and criteria for the registration process?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

According to the results from the 2011 ad-hoc module of the EU-Labour Force Survey on employment of disabled people, there are about 6 million people aged 15-64 ([1]) at EU level who have difficulties in seeing even if wearing glasses (1,9% of the population aged 15-64).

The Commission pays attention to all kinds of disabilities. The European Union signed on 30 April 2014 the Marrakesh Treaty which will facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. Four EU Member States have also signed the Treaty and the Commission encourages the other Member States to do so.

The issue of awarding benefits including special rights for persons with disabilities is under the competence of the national authorities of each Member State. In this context the Commission does not give any guidelines to Member States on the frequency and criteria for the registration process of blind and partially blind people in the EU.

The Commission provides operational support to the European Blind Union ([2]) which can provide information to its national organisations in each Member State.

([1]) This ad-hoc module covers only the working age population (i.e. the population aged 15-64).
([2]) http://www.euroblind.org/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004557/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Una spending review per l'UE: come rivedere la spesa per il funzionamento dell'amministrazione

L'Unione europea sta chiedendo grandi sacrifici a diversi Stati membri, tra cui l'Italia, per rispettare i parametri macroeconomici e i vincoli di bilancio previsti dal trattato sulla stabilità, sul coordinamento e sulla governance nell'Unione economica e monetaria (il cd. Fiscal compact, firmato il 2 marzo 2012 da 25 paesi membri). Al fine di rispettare gli impegni del patto di bilancio, diversi governi nazionali hanno avviato una spending review per ridurre e migliorare la propria spesa pubblica, in particolare quella destinata all'autofunzionamento dell'amministrazione.

Tuttavia, l'Unione europea ha un bilancio di quasi mille miliardi di euro per i prossimi 7 anni, dei quali oltre 60 sono destinati alle spese per l'amministrazione. Ritengo sia doveroso che l'UE per prima attui una seria spending review per verificare se tutte le sue spese siano necessarie e utili.

Alla luce di quanto premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se intende avviare una procedura di valutazione di impatto propedeutica a una spending review delle spese per l'amministrazione dell'UE (in particolare su: sedi e delegazioni dell'UE nei paesi terzi; sedi e delegazioni dell'UE negli Stati membri; spese per consulenze e incarichi esterni per la fornitura di beni, lavori e servizi; vetture di rappresentanza e di servizio; spese per missioni e di rappresentanza);

2. se e come intende migliorare il servizio di consultazione pubblica «La vostra voce in Europa» per incrementare la partecipazione dei cittadini al processo decisionale dell'UE, che, ad oggi, ha prodotto scarsi risultati in termini di coinvolgimenti di cittadini e stakeholder;

3. se intende costituire uno spaccio unico, almeno per la fornitura dei beni di uso e consumo, delle Direzioni Generali della Commissione?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2014)

1. Le dimensioni del bilancio amministrativo delle istituzioni dell'Unione europea sono state esaminate nell'ambito dei negoziati sul quadro finanziario pluriennale (QFP) per il periodo 2014-2020. Il Consiglio europeo del 7-8 febbraio 2013 ha osservato che i massimali di spesa convenuti tenevano conto degli effetti dei risparmi di spesa, fra cui una riduzione del 5 % del personale nel periodo 2013-2017 applicata a tutte le istituzioni, gli organi, le agenzie dell'UE e alle loro amministrazioni, un aumento dell'orario di lavoro del personale senza adeguamento delle retribuzioni, la riduzione delle spese non connesse al personale, ulteriori riforme dello statuto del personale e altre misure amministrative interne. Nel quadro della riforma dello statuto del personale, il metodo di adeguamento dei salari e delle pensioni è stato sospeso per due anni per tutto il personale. Dato il successivo accordo interistituzionale sul QFP, la Commissione non ritiene necessario effettuare una valutazione d'impatto o avviare un'ulteriore revisione della spesa amministrativa dell'UE. La Commissione illustra in dettaglio la spesa amministrativa annuale in un documento di lavoro che è presentato assieme al progetto di bilancio generale per l'esercizio finanziario.

2. La Commissione rimanda alla risposta all'interrogazione E-008003/2013 ([1]). La Commissione non è d'accordo sul fatto che lo sportello unico del portale «La vostra voce in Europa» abbia prodotto scarsi risultati in termini di maggiore partecipazione di cittadini e altre parti interessate. Il portale web serve per informare i cittadini e le parti interessate in modo trasparente su un'ampia serie di consultazioni pubbliche e fornisce informazioni relative al processo decisionale e alle modalità secondo le quali viene dato seguito alle consultazioni. Al fine di permettere ai cittadini e alle parti interessate di seguire più agevolmente il processo di elaborazione delle politiche della Commissione prima dell'adozione delle sue proposte o iniziative legislative e quindi di fornire un contributo significativo in una fase molto precoce, il 12 maggio 2014 la Commissione ha messo a disposizione sul sito web Europa un nuovo strumento di notifica automatica che permette alle parti interessate e ai cittadini di iscriversi a un servizio di notifica via e-mail che informa su consultazioni pubbliche e/o tabelle di marcia pubblicate di recente, documenti che descrivono le azioni previste dalla Commissione. L'iscrizione a questo strumento di notifica può essere fatta via internet all'indirizzo:
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/notifications/homePage.do

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-008003%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

3. La Commissione non intende istituire uno spaccio unico per la fornitura dei beni di uso e consumo alle direzioni generali. Le procedure di appalto sono svolte conformemente alle disposizioni del titolo V del regolamento finanziario e delle relative modalità di applicazione. Le procedure di appalto interistituzionali o inter-DG sono raccomandate se sono d'interesse comune e se vi è la possibilità di incrementi di efficienza, come è generalmente il caso e già avviene per i servizi/forniture utilizzati per le attività orizzontali (ad esempio informatica, audit, valutazione, traduzione, formazione). L'Ufficio per le infrastrutture e la logistica a Bruxelles (OIB), che fa parte della Commissione, assicura già un servizio funzionale acquisendo forniture e servizi per tutto il personale della Commissione a Bruxelles in modo efficace sotto il profilo dei costi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004557/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: An EU spending review relating to the functioning of its administration

The European Union is asking various Member States, including Italy, to make great sacrifices in order to comply with the macroeconomic parameters and budgetary constraints set out by the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (also known as the Fiscal Compact, and signed by 25 Member States on 2 March 2012). In order to meet the requirements laid down by this Treaty, many national governments have launched spending reviews to cut back their public expenditure, especially the costs arising from the functioning of their own administrations.

However, the European Union has a budget of almost a trillion euros for the next 7 years, with more than 60 billion euros being allocated to the costs of its administration. I thus believe that it would only be right and proper for the EU to first launch a serious spending review to check that all its costs are necessary and beneficial.

1. In light of the above, does the Commission intend to carry out an impact assessment prior to launching a spending review of the EU's administration (especially in relation to: EU headquarters and delegations in third countries; EU headquarters and delegations in Member States; costs of external contracts and consultancy relating to the provision of goods, labour or services; departmental vehicles (both individual and shared); and mission and representation costs)?

2. Does it intend to improve the Your Voice in Europe public consultation service in order to encourage more citizens to get involved in the EU's decision-making process, given that this initiative has so far produced very little in terms of increasing citizen and stakeholder involvement? If so, how?

3. Does it intend to set up a single outlet for the Directorates-General of the Commission, at least for supplying them with everyday consumer goods?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

1. The size of the administrative budget of the EU institutions was examined in the context of the negotiations on the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020. The European Council of 7-8 February 2013 noted that the agreed ceilings on expenditure included the effects of savings including a reduction applied to all EU institutions, bodies, agencies and their administrations of 5% in the staff over the period 2013-2017, an increase in working hours for staff without salary adjustment, reductions in non-staff related expenditure, further reforms of the staff regulations and other internal administrative measures. As part of the reform of the staff regulations, the adjustment of salaries and pensions of all staff through the salary method has been suspended for two years. Given the subsequent interinstitutional agreement on the MFF, the Commission does not consider it necessary to carry out an impact assessment or launch a further spending review of the EU's administration. Extensive details of the annual administrative expenditure are provided by the Commission in a working document that is submitted with the draft general budget for the financial year.

2. The Commission refers to its answer to Question E-008003/2013 ([1]). The Commission does not agree that the 'Your Voice in Europe' single access point has produced very little in terms of increasing citizen and stakeholder involvement. The website is used to inform citizens and stakeholders in a transparent manner on a wide range of public consultations. It provides information on the process and on how consultations are followed up. In order to make it even easier for citizens and stakeholders to follow the Commission's policy making process ahead of the adoption of its legislative proposals or initiatives, and hence to provide meaningful input at a very early stage, the Commission launched on 12 May 2014 a new automated notification tool on its Europa website, which allows stakeholders and citizens to subscribe to an e-mail alert service providing information about newly launched public consultations and/or newly published roadmaps, documents which outline the actions that the Commission is envisaging. Subscription to this notification tool is possible on the following web page: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/notifications/homePage.do

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bWQ%2bE-2013-008003%2b0%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN

3. The Commission does not intend to set up a single outlet for the supply of consumer goods to its Directorates General. Procurement is carried out in accordance with the provisions of Title V of the Financial Regulation and the relevant rules of application. Interinstitutional or inter-DGs procurement procedures are recommended if it is of common interest and if there is a possibility for efficiency gains, as is usually the case and already practised for services/supplies used for horizontal activities (e.g. IT, audit, evaluation, translation, training). The Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB) which is part of the Commission also already ensures a functional workplace by procuring supplies and services for all Commission staff in Brussels in a cost-effective way.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení P-004562/14
Komisi
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(11. dubna 2014)

Předmět: Konec projektu Dolceta

V prosinci 2003 byl Evropskou komisí zahájen projekt Dolceta (Developing On-Line Consumer Education and Training for Adults, později Consumer Education online). Jednalo se o komplexní celoevropský projekt v oblasti spotřebitelského vzdělávání. Během osmi let vyvíjeli experti v členských státech postupně obsah osmi rozsáhlých modulů v oblastech spotřebitelského práva, finanční gramotnosti, udržitelné spotřeby, bezpečnosti produktů atd. Cílem projektu bylo zvyšovat povědomí evropských občanů o jejich spotřebitelských právech. Projekt cílil jak na širokou veřejnost, tak poskytoval informace a materiály pro lektory, učitele i neziskové organizace.

V průběhu let se portál stal mnohatisícistránkovou spotřebitelskou encyklopedií, jejíž autoři byli vždy fundovaní odborníci. Počet návštěvníků portálu se jen v České republice pohyboval v řádech tisíců měsíčně.

V roce 2013 se Komise z důvodů nákladnosti aktualizace a udržování projektu rozhodla jeho celý obsah znepřístupnit a nahradit ho projektem ConsumerClassroom.eu, který na rozdíl od předchozího projektu neposkytuje informace spotřebitelům, ale pouze funguje pro potřeby učitelů, aby mohli sdílet své výukové materiály. Z původního portálu Dolceta.eu není na ConsumerClassroom.eu jediná informace.

Nezisková organizace Generation Europe žádala Evropskou komisi o možnost původní obsah portálu (moduly týkající se jádra spotřebitelského vzdělávání) s uvedením zdroje znovu zpřístupnit a na vlastní náklady aktualizovat, aby čeští spotřebitelé nepřišli o svůj jedinečný zdroj informací. Stanovisko Komise bylo zamítavé s odůvodněním, že materiály je nyní z důvodu technické náročnosti na převedení možné užívat jen „uvnitř Evropské komise".

1. Vzhledem k tomu, že Komise již investovala do tvorby Dolceta přes statisíce eur z veřejných zdrojů, měla by mít veřejnost právo potřebné informace nadále využívat. Jakým způsobem Komise vysvětlí, že investice do Dolcety budou nyní po znepřístupnění obsahu Dolcety znehodnoceny?

2. Jak Komise, vzhledem k užitečnosti informací pro spotřebitele a hájení jejich práv, zaručí, že obsah Dolcety bude poskytnut neziskovým organizacím v členských státech, které jsou ochotny do projektu nadále investovat vlastní zdroje?

Odpověď komisaře Andora jménem Komise
(22. května 2014)

Internetová stránka Dolceta.eu byla v roce 2011 předmětem hodnocení. Závěrem bylo, že stránka – založená v roce 2002 – by měla být zrušena, jelikož od té doby do velké míry pozbyla smyslu, neboť vnitrostátní poskytovatelé mezitím vypracovali bohatější, cílenější a pravidelněji aktualizované zdroje informací ([1]).

Než však Komise dne 30. června 2013 stránku z internetu stáhla, opakovaně vnitrostátní orgány a sdružení spotřebitelů informovala, že je zde možnost obsah přesunout na vnitrostátní stránky. Uživatelé byli o plánovaném stažení stránky Dolceta informováni 9 měsíců dopředu. Protože byla již tehdy velká část obsahu stránky zastaralá či dostupná z jiných zdrojů, nebyly obdrženy žádné žádosti o přesun.

V reakci na žádost, která byla českou organizací předložena po stažení stránky, Komise přezkoumala, zda by bylo možné obsah stránky Dolceta zpřístupnit. Protože už internetová stránka jako taková neexistuje a Komise má obsah k dispozici pouze v podobě nezpracovaných údajů, ukázalo se, že by konverze a výběr specifických materiálů vyžadoval neúměrně velkou investici technických a finančních prostředků, jež se objektivní hodnotou materiálů nedá ospravedlnit.

Učební materiály ze stránky Dolceta, které úspěšně prošly kontrolou kvality, byly nahrány na ConsumerClassroom.eu ([2]), moderní stránku pro vzdělávání spotřebitelů, jež byla spuštěna 15. března 2013. Ta sjednocuje rozsáhlou knihovnu s materiály z celé EU pro vzdělávání spotřebitelů, interaktivní nástroje a nástroje pro spolupráci s cílem pomoci pedagogickým pracovníkům připravit a sdílet lekce se studenty a ostatními učiteli. Stránku již navštívily tisíce učitelů.

([1]) ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/strategy/docs/evaluation_consumer_education_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consumerclassroom.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004562/14
to the Commission
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: End of the Dolceta project

In December 2003, the Commission launched the Dolceta ('Developing On-Line Consumer Education and Training for Adults'. subsequently known as 'Consumer Education Online') project. This was a comprehensive, Europe-wide project aimed at educating consumers. For eight years, experts in the Member States gradually developed eight extensive modules covering areas such as consumer law, financial literacy, sustainable consumption and product safety. The aim of the project was to raise EU citizens' awareness of their consumer rights. The project not only targeted the general public, it also provided information and materials for lecturers, teachers and non-profit organisations.

Over the years, the portal transformed into a several-thousand-page-long encyclopaedia whose authors were always respected experts. The number of visitors to the site in the Czech Republic alone was in the thousands each month.

In 2013, in view of the high cost of updating and maintaining the project, the Commission decided to make the entire content of the website inaccessible and to replace it with the 'ConsumerClassroom.eu' project. Unlike Dolceta, the new project does not provide consumers with information; rather, it serves only the needs of teachers, allowing them to share their teaching materials. Not one piece of information from the original Dolceta portal has been published on ConsumerClassroom.eu.

The non-profit organisation 'Generation Europe' has asked the Commission whether it would be possible to make the original contents (modules covering core consumer education) of the portal available on its own website — while stating the source of the information — and to update it at its own cost, so that Czech consumers do not lose their only source of information. The Commission responded negatively, arguing that the materials could now only be used within the Commission owing to the technical difficulty involved in transferring them.

1. Given that the Commission has already invested over EUR 100 000 in public funds to set up Dolceta, the general public should be entitled to continue using this vital information. How will the Commission explain that its investment in Dolceta is worthless now that the contents of the Dolceta portal have been made inaccessible?

2. Given the usefulness of this information for consumers and for protecting consumer rights, how will the Commission guarantee that the contents of the Dolceta portal are made available to non-profit organisations in Member States which are willing to continue to invest their own money in the project?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Dolceta.eu was subject to an evaluation in 2011. This concluded that the website — conceived in 2002 — should be discontinued, since it had over time lost much of its rationale, as national stakeholders had built richer, more focused and more regularly updated information sources ([1]).

Before taking the site offline on 30 June 2013, the Commission repeatedly informed national authorities and consumer associations of the possibility to transfer Dolceta content to national websites. Dolceta users were informed of the upcoming closure during 9 months. As much of the Dolceta content was getting out of date or available via other sites, no requests for transfers were received.

The Commission has examined the possibility of making Dolceta content available in response to a request from a Czech organisation, received after the site had been taken down. However, given that the website as such no longer exists and the content is now available to the Commission only in the form or raw data, the procedure for converting and extracting specific materials turned out to require an excessive investment of technical and financial means, which cannot be justified by the objective value of the materials.

Teaching materials from Dolceta that passed a quality control have been transferred to ConsumerClassroom.eu ([2]), a modern community site for consumer education launched on 15 March 2013. This brings together an extensive library of consumer education resources from across the EU along with interactive and collaborative tools to help education professionals prepare and share lessons with students and other teachers. It has already attracted thousands of teachers.

([1]) ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/strategy/docs/evaluation_consumer_education_report_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consumerclassroom.eu/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004563/14
an die Kommission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(11. April 2014)

Betrifft: Umgang der Europäischen Kommission mit Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung gemäß Artikel 117 der Geschäftsordnung des Europäischen Parlaments

Auf der Grundlage von Artikel 230 AEUV und gemäß den Bestimmungen von Artikel 117 der Geschäftsordnung des Europäischen Parlaments haben die Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments das Recht, Fragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung an die Europäische Kommission zu richten. Im Allgemeinen ist das Instrument der parlamentarischen Anfrage ein zentrales und unverzichtbares Mittel zur Ausübung der Kontrollfunktion durch das Parlament und seine Mitglieder. Zu diesem Zweck bedarf es aber auch einer Beantwortung durch die Europäische Kommission, die Interesse an einer guten Zusammenarbeit mit dem Parlament erkennen lässt, auf Detailfragen eingeht und Argumente sowie Entscheidungsgrundlagen in hinreichender Tiefe darlegt. Oftmals werden die schriftlichen Antworten der Europäischen Kommission diesem Anspruch allerdings nicht gerecht. Beispielhaft seien hier kurz die Antworten auf die Anfragen E-004724/2012 sowie E-012540/2013 und E-014074/2013 angeführt. Stattdessen erschöpfen sie sich oft in wortgewaltigen Phrasen sowie bürokratischen Formalien und erwecken den Eindruck kaum verhohlener Geringschätzung für das Europäische Parlament und die Probleme von Bürgern und Unternehmen, auf die mit diesen Anfragen aufmerksam gemacht werden soll.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Welche Bedeutung misst die Kommission der Beantwortung parlamentarischer Anfragen bei?

2. Wie steht die Kommission zu der Aussage, dass eine detaillierte Beantwortung parlamentarischer Anfragen eine unverzichtbare Voraussetzung für einen funktionierenden Parlamentarismus auf europäischer Ebene ist?

3. Ist der Kommission das geflügelte Wort „Anfrage an den Sender Jerewan“ bekannt? Wie bewertet die Kommission den Umstand, dass sich insbesondere Bewohner ehemals „real-sozialistischer“ Staaten mit Blick auf die Beantwortung von Fragen zunehmend daran erinnert fühlen?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juni 2014)

Die Kommission möchte betonen, dass sie parlamentarischen Anfragen große Aufmerksamkeit widmet, da sie ein wichtiges Element demokratischer Kontrolle durch das Parlament darstellen, und dass sie zu diesem Zweck eine ganze Reihe von Ressourcen bereitstellt. Sie ist bemüht, parlamentarische Anfragen so genau und gründlich wie möglich zu beantworten, insbesondere solche, die von allgemeinem Interesse für die europäischen Bürger sind.

Da die Anzahl der parlamentarischen Anfragen ist in den letzten Jahren beträchtlich angestiegen ist, muss die Kommission diese Anfragen daher so effizient wie möglich bearbeiten, wobei die Beantwortung der Fragen natürlich das zentrale Anliegen ist. Allein im Jahr 2013 hat die Kommission mehr als 13 000 parlamentarische Anfragen der Abgeordneten des Europäischen Parlaments beantwortet. Sehr viele enthielten mehrere Fragen, die eine intensive Recherche der Kommissionsdienststellen erforderlich machten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004563/14
to the Commission
Hermann Winkler (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: The European Commission's handling of questions for written answer in accordance with Rule 117 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament

On the basis of Article 230 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and in accordance with Rule 117 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, Members of the European Parliament have the right to put questions for written answer to the European Commission. In general, parliamentary questions are a central and indispensable means for Parliament and its Members to exercise their control function. For this end to be achieved, however, the European Commission must also provide answers that convey an interest in collaborating effectively with Parliament, go into detail, and set out arguments and reasons for decisions in sufficient depth. In reality, the European Commission's written answers often fall short of this requirement. The answers to Questions E-004724/2012, E-012540/2013 and E-014074/2013 may be cited here briefly by way of example. Instead, they often confine themselves to high-flown phrases and bureaucratic platitudes and create an impression of barely concealed contempt for the European Parliament and for the problems of people and businesses which these questions are supposed to bring to their attention.

Can the Commission answer the following questions in this regard:

1. What degree of importance does the Commission attach to answering parliamentary questions?

2. How does the Commission view the assertion that detailed answers to parliamentary questions are an indispensable precondition of a functioning parliamentary system at the European level?

3. Is the Commission familiar with the old 'Radio Yerevan' jokes, in which questions are asked but never given a straight answer? What is the Commission's view of the fact that Europe's residents, especially those in countries that experienced 'really existing socialism', increasingly feel reminded of them?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission wishes to reiterate that it pays great attention to parliamentary questions, an essential instrument for the democratic scrutiny exercised by Parliament, and that it makes available a significant amount of resources for this purpose. It seeks to answer parliamentary questions as thoroughly and accurately as possible, in particular those which are of general interest to European citizens.

The number of written questions has increased considerably during recent years and hence the Commission must necessarily reply to parliamentary questions as efficiently as possible, while still responding to the question(s) raised. In 2013 alone, the Commission responded to more than 13 000 written questions from Members of the European Parliament. Many of these questions included several sub-questions and required extensive research by Commission services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004564/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Emergency financing for Ukraine

The amount being given to Ukraine is EUR 1.6 billion. Is this a loan or is it a grant? If it is a loan, what are the terms of this loan, and are the terms such that it is in fact a crypto-grant?

Answer given by Commissioner Füle on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

Macro Financial Assistance is provided to Ukraine as a medium-term loan in support of the balance of payments and could be used to honour its debt service commitments, alleviate its substantial budget deficit and build up its foreign currency reserve. The loan is not intended to be used for any specific budget expenditure or project. The loan is also aimed at supporting economic reforms in the country by attaching a number of structural reform conditions to the disbursements aimed at improving overall macroeconomic management. The conditions agreed are in the areas of public finance management and, in particular, tackling corruption; trade policy; energy and financial sector.

Macro Financial Assistance is an exceptional EU crisis-response instrument available to EU neighbouring countries experiencing severe balance of payment problems. It is complementary to the assistance provided by the IMF. MFA loans are financed through EU borrowings on the capital market. The funds are then on-lent at similar financial terms to the beneficiary countries.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004565/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Emergency financing for Ukraine

How much is the first payment to Ukraine anticipated to be, and similarly, how much is the second payment anticipated to be?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

It has been agreed in the memorandum of understanding that the EUR 1 billion MFA will be disbursed in two tranches of EUR 500 million each. This MoU has been signed by Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the Commission and by the Chairman of the National Bank of Ukraine and the Minister of Finance of Ukraine and ratified by the Ukrainian parliament.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004566/14
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Emergency financing for Ukraine

With the second payment being conditional, does this also mean the first is conditional, or is the initial payment in fact unconditional?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The first disbursement of the EUR 1 billion Macro-Financial Assistance loan programme takes place on the conditions set out in Article 4 of Council Decision 2014/215/EU providing macro-financial assistance to Ukraine.

Pursuant to paragraph 6 of that Article, the disbursement should start immediately as soon as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme is in place. On 30 April 2014, the IMF Executive Board approved the new Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with Ukraine and made the first instalment under that arrangement available.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004568/14
à la Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(11 avril 2014)

Objet: L'attractivité du site de Luxembourg

1. Le décrochage des salaires dans les institutions européennes par rapport à la réalité économique du Luxembourg a été notable et constant ces années. La Commission peut-elle fournir une comparaison de l'évolution des salaires et du pouvoir d'achat entre ses services à Luxembourg et Bruxelles depuis l'entrée en vigueur des accords Kinnock-Polfer en 2003?

La Commission peut-elle fournir le bilan des mouvements de personnel durant la même période: arrivées et départs à Luxembourg et à Bruxelles et transferts entre ces deux sièges? Quelles actions positives a entrepris la Commission pour assurer la rationalité et le bon fonctionnement des services transardennais et rendre ainsi opérationnels et durables les accords de siège?

2. Sans aller jusqu'à instaurer formellement un coefficient correcteur pour le Luxembourg, le statut 2014 reconnaît de facto la spécificité de sa situation économique en introduisant un index pondéré avec la Belgique pour les révisions salariales annuelles à venir. Par l'application de cet index, une divergence de l'indice des prix à Luxembourg induira une variation pondérée dans le même sens de la masse salariale, appliquée indistinctement au personnel des deux sièges.

La Commission peut-elle expliquer comment cette méthode pourrait garantir le respect du principe statutaire de l'équivalence de pouvoir d'achat entre Bruxelles et Luxembourg?

La Commission peut-elle comparer l'impact budgétaire d'un tel calcul avec le résultat de l'application séparée d'indices spécifiques à la Belgique et au Luxembourg, eu égard aux différences de salaires? Si l'application d'un tel indice va à l'encontre de principes statutaires sans générer d'économies budgétaires pour autant, voire tout le contraire, comment la Commission justifie-t-elle sa proposition?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(19 juin 2014)

Afin de prendre en considération l'évolution du pouvoir d'achat des fonctionnaires à Luxembourg, la récente réforme du statut des fonctionnaires, adoptée par le Parlement européen et le Conseil selon la procédure législative ordinaire, a mis en place l'indice commun, qui mesure le coût de la vie à la fois à Bruxelles et à Luxembourg, pondéré en fonction de la répartition du personnel (article 1er, paragraphe 2, de l'annexe XI du statut des fonctionnaires). De plus, la Commission a, en 2010, honoré son engagement d'assigner au minimum 3426 fonctionnaires, agents temporaires et agents contractuels à Luxembourg à la fin de la période de transition, conformément à l'accord Polfer-Kinnock.

S'agissant de la question du pouvoir d'achat comparé du personnel à Bruxelles et à Luxembourg, nous attirons l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur le fait que le statut des fonctionnaires, modifié par le colégislateur, prévoit expressément que «aucun coefficient correcteur n'est applicable pour la Belgique et pour le Luxembourg» (voir l'article 64 dans sa version modifiée et l'article 3, paragraphe 5, de l'annexe XI). Le tribunal de la fonction publique de l'Union a récemment rejeté des demandes de fonctionnaires affectés à Luxembourg visant à contester l'absence d'un coefficient spécial pour ce lieu (affaire F-29/09 Lebedef et Jones/Commission).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004568/14
to the Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: The attractiveness of the Luxembourg site

1. The failure of salaries in the European institutions to keep pace with the economic reality of Luxembourg has been obvious and consistent in recent years. Can the Commission provide a comparison in the development of salaries and purchasing power between its services in Luxembourg and Brussels since the entry into force of the Kinnock-Polfer agreements in 2003?

Can the Commission provide an overview of staff movements during the same period: arrivals and departures in Luxembourg and Brussels, and transfers between these two headquarters? What positive actions has the Commission undertaken to ensure efficiency and smooth running of the 'transardennais' services, thus making the headquarters agreements operational and sustainable?

2. Without going as far as formal implementation of a weighting for Luxembourg, the 2014 statute recognises de facto its particular economic situation with the introduction of an index weighted in comparison with Belgium for future annual salary reviews. If that index is applied, a divergence in the Luxembourg price index will consequently introduce a weighted variation in all salaries, to be applied indiscriminately to staff in both headquarters.

Can the Commission explain how this method could ensure respect for the statutory principle of equivalent purchasing power between Brussels and Luxembourg? With regard to salary differences, can the Commission compare the budgetary impact of such a calculation with the outcome of applying specific indices to Belgium and Luxembourg separately? If the application of such an index runs counter to statutory principles without producing any budgetary economies at all, quite the opposite in fact, how can the Commission justify the proposal?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

In order to take into account the evolution of purchasing power of officials in Luxembourg, the recent reform of the Staff Regulations, adopted by the European Parliament and the Council through the ordinary legislative procedure, introduced the Joint Index, which measures the cost of living in both Brussels and Luxembourg, weighted according to the distribution of staff (Article 1(2) of Annex XI to the Staff Regulations). Furthermore, in 2010, the Commission met its commitment to have at least 3 426 officials, temporary staff and contract staff assigned to Luxembourg at the end of the transition period under the Polfer-Kinnock agreement.

On the question of comparative purchasing power of staff in Brussels and Luxembourg, the attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the Staff Regulations as amended by the co-legislator expressly provide that 'no correction coefficient shall be applicable in Belgium and Luxembourg' (see Article 64 as amended and Article 3(5) of Annex XI). The Union Civil Service Tribunal has recently rejected applications by officials based in Luxembourg which sought to challenge the absence of a special coefficient for that place (Case F-29/09, Lebedef and Jones v. Commission).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004569/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-kriminalità bbażata fuq il-ġeneru

Id-delitti kontra n-nisa huma problema persistenti u anki waħda li qiegħda tikber f'ħafna pajjiżi li qed jiżviluppaw. Fl-Indja, ir-riċerka tissuġerixxi li l-preżenza ta' rappreżentanti politiċi femminili tista' tkun għodda effettiva biex tagħti setgħa lin-nisa fil-ġlieda kontra l-kriminalità bbażata fuq il-ġeneru.

Il-politiċi femminili għandhom l-ikbar impatt fuq l-għoti ta' leħen lill-vittmi femminili meta jkunu preżenti fuq livell ta' gvern lokali, fejn jgħixu aktar qrib ta' dawn il-vittmi. Ir-rappurtar ta' delitti kontra n-nisa — speċjalment il-vjolenza domestika — huwa wkoll problema fil-pajjiżi żviluppati, iżda r-reazzjonijiet istituzzjonali ta' spiss jiskoraġġixxu r-rappurtar u ftit jagħmlu biex inaqqsu r-rati tal-abbuż domestiku. Ir-rati ta' parteċipazzjoni politika għan-nisa huma ġeneralment baxxi kemm fil-pajjiżi li qed jiżviluppaw u kemm f'dawk żviluppati. Siġġijiet riservati, segwiti minn kwoti ta' kandidati leġiżlattivi, jistgħu jkunu l-aktar metodi effettivi biex aktar nisa jiġu inkoraġġiti jidħlu fil-politika.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti data ta' statistika dwar in-numru ta' nisa li kienu involuti f'atti kriminali tul din l-aħħar sena, imqassma skont l-età u l-Istat Membru?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi data dwar in-numru ta' delitti kontra n-nisa li ġew rappurtati lill-pulizija fl-UE-28 matul din l-aħħar sena, u tidentifika t-tipi ta' delitti li ġew rappurtati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Il-Eurostat tiġbor dejta dwar l-UE kollha u tippubblika statistiċi dwar reati serji u vjolenti bħala parti mis-serje *Statistics in Focus* tagħha. L-aktar pubblikazzjoni riċenti tagħti ħarsa lejn ix-xejriet fir-reati u l-ġustizzja kriminali għall-perjodu sal-2010.

Minn din is-sena, il-Eurostat ser tiġbor dejta maqsuma skont is-sess għal ċerti reati koperti minn din il-kollezzjoni. Dan huwa konformi mal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar il-Kejl tar-Reati fl-UE: 2011-2015, fejn il-miżuri tagħha jinkludu l-introduzzjoni ta' varjabbli demografiċi bħas-sess.

Fi ħdan il-qasam tal-kriminalità organizzata, DĠ Affarijiet Interni u l-Eurostat ippubblikaw b'mod konġunt rapport statistiku dwar it-traffikar tal-bnedmin, b'dejta maqsuma skont is-sess kemm għat-traffikanti u għall-vittmi. Għandu joħroġ it-tieni rapport ta' din ix-xorti aktar tard din is-sena.

F'Marzu 2014, l-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali (FRA) ippubblikat ir-riżultati tal-ewwel stħarriġ madwar l-UE kollha fuq l-esperjenzi tan-nisa tal-vjolenza. ([1]) Skont l-istħarriġ, bejn terz tal-vittmi ta' vjolenza mis-sieħeb u kwart tal-vittmi ta' vjolenza mhux mis-sieħeb jirrapportaw l-aktar episodju attwali serju lill-pulizija jew lil xi servizz ieħor. Dan jinkludi l-vjolenza fiżika u sesswali (mis-sieħeb u minn nies oħra), vjolenza psikoloġika mis-sieħeb, u l-istalking u l-fastidju sesswali (inkluż il-fastidju elettroniku).

L-Istitut Ewropew għall-Ugwaljanza bejn is-Sessi (EIGE) ħareġ ukoll għodda għall-ippjanar onlajn għas-sorsi tad-dejta amministrattiva u prodotti statistiċi relatati. ([2]) Din l-għodda tagħti informazzjoni lil dawk l-Istati Membri li għandhom sorsi ta' dejta amministrattiva b'ambitu nazzjonali fuq tliet kategoriji ta' inċidenti vjolenti (vjolenza mis-sieħeb personali, vjolenza sesswali u l-istalking) u skont is-settur ta' dak is-sors (pulizija, ġustizzja, saħħa u protezzjoni soċjali).

([1]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results
([2]) http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/administrative-data-sources

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004569/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Gender crime

Crimes against women are a persistent and even growing problem in many developing countries. In India, research suggests that having female political representatives can be an effective tool to empower women in the battle against gender crime.

Female politicians have the biggest impact on giving a voice to female victims when they are present at local government level, where they live in greater proximity to said victims. Reporting of crimes against women — especially domestic violence — is also a problem in developed countries, but institutional responses often discourage reporting and do little to reduce rates of domestic abuse. Political participation rates for women are generally low in both developing and developed countries. Reserved seats, followed by legislative candidate quotas, may be the most effective ways of encouraging more women to enter politics.

1. Can the Commission provide statistical data on the number of women who have been involved in criminal acts in the past year, broken down according to age and Member State?

2. Can the Commission provide data on the number of crimes against women which have been reported to the police in the EU-28 during the past year, and identify the types of crimes that were reported?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

Eurostat collects EU-wide data and publishes statistics on serious and violent crime as part of its *Statistics in Focus* series. The most recent publication looked at trends in crime and criminal justice for the period to 2010.

From this year, Eurostat will collect breakdowns by sex for certain offences covered by this collection. This is in line with the Commission Action Plan on Measuring Crime in the EU: 2011-2015, whose actions include the introduction of demographic variables such as sex.

Within the field of organised crime, DG Home Affairs and Eurostat jointly published in 2013 a statistical report on trafficking in human beings, which disaggregated for sex of both traffickers and victims. A second such report is due later this year.

In March 2014, the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) released the results of the first EU-wide survey on women's experiences of violence. ([1]) According to the survey, between one in three victims of partner violence and one in four victims of non-partner violence report their most recent serious incident to the police or some other service. This included physical and sexual violence (by partners & non-partners), psychological violence by a partner, and stalking and sexual harassment (including cyber harassment).

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has also produced an online mapping tool on administrative data sources and related statistical products. ([2]) This tool provides information on those Member States that have administrative data sources with a national scope on three categories of violent incidents (intimate partner violence, sexual violence and stalking) and according to the sector where the source is located (police, justice, health and social protection).

([1]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results
([2]) http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/administrative-data-sources

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004570/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Stħarriġ dwar il-forza tax-xogħol 2013

Skont l-istħarriġ dwar il-forza tax-xogħol tal-2013, il-popolazzjoni tal-UE-28 ta' bejn il-15 u l-74 sena ġiet ikklassifikata fi tliet gruppi: 216.4-il miljun persuna kellhom xogħol, 26.2 miljun kienu bla xogħol u 137.2 miljun ma kinux ekonomikament attivi.

Fost dawk li kellhom xogħol, 43.7 miljun kienu ħaddiema part-time, li 9.9 miljun minnhom (23%) kienu sottoimpjegati, jiġifieri xtaqu jaħdmu aktar sigħat u kienu disponibbli biex jagħmlu hekk.

Min-naħa l-oħra, fost dawk li ma kinux ekonomikament attivi, kien hemm 9.3 miljun ruħ ta' bejn il-15 u l-74 sena disponibbli għax-xogħol imma li ma kinux qegħdin ifittxu xogħol, u 2.2 miljuni jfittxu xogħol imma li ma kinux disponibbli.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni toħroġ il-pjan direzzjonali tagħha biex trażżan il-qgħad?

2. Hemm stabbiliti xi politiki tas-suq tax-xogħol attivi?

3. Il-Kummissjoni għandha informazzjoni fuq il-kundizzjonijiet soċjali tan-nies li qegħdin jaħdmu fuq bażi part-time?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni poġġiet il-ġlieda kontra l-qgħad, speċjalment il-qgħad taż-żgħażagħ, fil-qofol tal-aġenda tagħha ([1]). Permezz tal-Pakkett dwar l-Impjieg ([2]), issuġġeriet azzjonijiet lill-Istati Membri sabiex jixprunaw il-ħolqien tal-impjiegi, b'mod speċifiku f'setturi li qed jikbru malajr, u fl-istess ħin jinvestu fil-ħiliet (anki bl-appoġġ ta' fondi mill-UE) u jsaħħu l-mobbiltà tal-ħaddiema fl-UE. Fil-Pakkett dwar l-Impjieg taż-Żgħażagħ ([3]), il-Kummissjoni pproponiet l-Iskema ta' Garanzija għaż-Żgħażagħ. Il-Kunsill Ewropew approva Inizjattiva għall-Impjieg taż-Żgħażagħ li tiswa EUR 6 biljun, bħala appoġġ għal miżuri favur l-impjieg taż-żgħażagħ.

Il-politiki dwar is-suq tax-xogħol attiv huma l-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri. Permezz tas-Semestru Ewropew, il-Kummissjoni tivvaluta l-isforzi tal-Istati Membri u tipproponi, fejn xieraq, rakkomandazzjonijiet speċifiċi għal kull pajjiż. Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni bdiet ir-riforma tan-netwerk tas-servizzi tal-impjieg fil-livell tal-UE (EURES), u ressqet proposta biex issaħħaħ it-tagħlim reċiproku bejn is-servizzi nazzjonali pubbliċi tal-impjiegi ([4]).

Il-Kummissjoni twettaq monitoraġġ b'mod regolari tas-sitwazzjoni soċjali u tal-impjiegi fl-Istati Membri, inkluż fir-rigward tax-xogħol part-time. Bħala medja, għall-UE28, ir-riskju ta' faqar tal-persuni li jaħdmu part-time kienu kważi darbtejn ikbar minn dak tal-ħaddiema full-time fl-2012 ([5]) (b'differenzi konsiderevoli minn Stat Membru għall-ieħor) ([6]). Matul il-kriżi, f'għadd ta' pajjiżi, ir-riskju ta' faqar tal-ħaddiema part-time baqa' jikber. Il-kuntratti part-time ġeneralment jiffaċilitaw il-parteċipazzjoni fis-suq tax-xogħol, partikularment għan-nisa u għaż-żgħażagħ. Madankollu, jistgħu jiġu implimentati aktar riformi fiskali u tal-benefiċċji, sabiex jitnaqqas kemm jista' jkun ir-riskju ta' sottoimpjieg mhux mixtieq, u sabiex jiġi żgurat livell xieraq ta' protezzjoni soċjali għall-ħaddiema part-time.

([1]) COM(2013) 800 finali tat-13 ta' Novembru 2013.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 tat-18 ta' April 2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 tal-5 ta' Diċembru 2012.
([4]) COM(2013) 430 finali tas-17 ta' Ġunju 2013.
([5]) (13.7% vs. 7.7%).
([6]) Rapport Annwali tal-Kumitat tal-Protezzjoni Soċjali dwar is-sitwazzjoni soċjali fl-Unjoni Ewropea (2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004570/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: 2013 labour force survey

According to the 2013 labour force survey, the EU-28 population aged 15 to 74 has been classified into three groups: 216.4 million persons in employment, 26.2 million unemployed and 137.2 million economically inactive.

Among those in employment, 43.7 million were part-time workers, of which 9.9 million (23%) were underemployed, meaning they wished to work more hours and were available to do so.

On the other hand, among the economically inactive population, there were 9.3 million people aged 15 to 74 available for work but not seeking employment, and 2.2 million seeking work but not available.

1. Can the Commission unveil its roadmap to curb unemployment?

2. Are there any active labour market policies in place?

3. Does the Commission have information on the social conditions of the people working on a part-time basis?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission has put the fight against unemployment, especially youth unemployment, at the centre of its agenda. ([1]) With the Employment Package, ([2]) it has suggested actions to Member States to stimulate job creation, notably in fast-growing sectors, invest in skills, (also with the support of EU Funds) and enhance EU labour mobility. In the Youth Employment Package ([3]), the Commission proposed the Youth Guarantee. The European Council approved a EUR 6 billion worth Youth Employment Initiative in support of youth employment measures.

Active labour market policies are competence of the Member States. Through the European Semester, the Commission assesses Member States' efforts and proposes, where appropriate, country-specific recommendations. However, the Commission has initiated the reform of the EU-level network of employment services (EURES), and advanced a proposal to reinforce mutual learning between national public employment services ([4]).

The Commission regularly monitors the employment and social situation in the Member States, including part-time work. On average, for EU28, the poverty risk of people working part-time was nearly twice that of full-time workers in 2012 ([5]) (with considerable differences across the Member States). ([6]) During the crisis, in a number of countries part-time workers have seen their poverty risk increase. Part-time contracts generally facilitate labour market participation, notably of women and young people. However, further tax and benefit reforms could be implemented to minimise the risk of involuntary underemployment and to ensure an adequate level of social protection for part-time workers.

([1]) COM(2013) 800 final of 13.11.2013.
([2]) COM(2012) 173 of 18.4.2012.
([3]) COM(2012) 727-728-729 of 5.12.2012.
([4]) COM(2013) 430 final of 17.6.2013.
([5]) 13.7% vs. 7.7%.
([6]) Annual Report of the Social Protection Committee on the social situation in the European Union (2013).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004571/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Iż-żieda fir-rati ta' mortalità tat-trabi

Skont l-Eurostat, Malta hija l-uniku Stat Membru fejn ir-rata ta' mortalità tat-trabi żdiedet bejn l-2001 u l-2011. In-numru ta' mwiet tat-trabi ta' taħt l-età ta' sena għal kull 1 000 twelid żdied minn 3.8 għal 6.5, filwaqt li bħala medja fl-UE ir-rata ta' mortalità tat-trabi matul dan il-perjodu niżlet minn 5.7 għal 3.9. Sal-2012, in-numru f'Malta kien niżel mill-ġdid għal 5.3.

Fid-dawl ta' dan:

1. Il-Kummissjoni hija kapaċi tipprovdi analiżi fejn tispjega l-isfond taż-żiediet jew tat-tnaqqisiet fir-rati ta' mortalità tat-trabi fl-Istati Membri kollha, u l-politiki li ġew implimentati biex dan il-fenomenu jiġi kumbattut?

2. B'mod partikolari, x'inhi r-raġuni taż-żieda fiċ-ċifri Maltin?

3. Xi proġetti għandha fis-seħħ il-Kummissjoni biex tikkumbatti r-rati għolja ta' mortalità tat-trabi u biex tiffaċilita l-iskambju tal-aħjar prattiki bejn l-Istati Membri f'din il-ġlieda?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(11 ta' Ġunju 2014)

F'Mejju 2013, il-proġett EURO-PERISTAT ([1]) iffinanzjat mill-UE ħareġ it-tieni Rapport Ewropew dwar is-Saħħa Perinatali intitolat "Is-saħħa u l-kura ta' nisa tqal u t-trabi fl-Ewropa fl-2010" ([2]). Ir-rapport jindika tnaqqis fir-rata tal-mortalità tat-trabi f'ħafna pajjiżi Ewropej matul l-aħħar snin. Madankollu, din ir-rata tvarja b'mod konsiderevoli bejn il-pajjiżi. Ir-rapport jiddikjara wkoll li aktar minn 60% tat-trabi li mietu kienu twieldu qabel iż-żmien jew twieldu jiżnu inqas minn 2,500 g.

Il-lista mqassra tal-Indikaturi Prinċipali tas-Saħħa Ewropea (ECHI) ([3]) tinkludi indikatur dwar ir-rata ta' mortalità tat-trabi (dejta tal-Eurostat ([4])). Fl-Anness tinsab tabella bl-aktar dejta annwali reċenti. Għal pajjiżi b'popolazzjoni baxxa, huwa rrakkomandat li jikkunsidraw il-medja tal-indikatur tul perjodu ta' 3 snin.

Il-Kummissjoni qed taħdem fil-qafas tal-Komunikazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni "Solidarjetà fis-Saħħa" ([5]) biex tappoġġa lill-Istati Membri biex inaqqsu l-inugwaljanzi fis-settur tas-saħħa.

Skont it-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea, l-Istati Membri huma responsabbli b'mod sħiħ għall-ġestjoni tas-servizzi tas-saħħa u għall-allokazzjoni tar-riżorsi assenjati lilhom. L-azzjoni tal-Unjoni Ewropea għandha tirrispetta r-responsabbiltajiet tal-Istati Membri għall-organizzazzjoni u għall-għoti ta' servizzi tas-saħħa u tal-kura medika.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=DEMO_MINFIND .
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/social_determinants/policy/commission_communication/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004571/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Increasing infant mortality rates

According to Eurostat, Malta is the only Member State in which the infant mortality rate increased between 2001 and 2011. The number of deaths of infants under the age of 1 year per 1 000 births went up from 3.8 to 6.5, whereas on average in the EU the infant mortality rate went down from 5.7 to 3.9 during this period. By 2012, the number in Malta had again gone down to 5.3.

In light of this:

1. Is the Commission able to provide an analysis explaining the background to the increases or decreases in infant mortality rates throughout the Member States, and policies that have been implemented to combat the phenomenon?

2. In particular, what is the reason for the increase in the Maltese figures?

3. What projects does the Commission have in place to combat high infant mortality rates and to facilitate the exchange of best practices between Member States in this fight?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

In May 2013, the EU-funded Euro-Peristat ([1]) project released the second European Perinatal Health Report entitled 'Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010' ([2]). The report points out a decline of the infant mortality rate in most European countries over recent years. However, this rate still varies considerably between countries. The report also states that over 60% of the infants who died were born preterm or with a birth weight under 2 500g.

The shortlist of the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) ([3]) includes an indicator on infant mortality rate (data from Eurostat ([4])). In annex, a table is provided with most recent yearly data. For low populated countries, it is recommended to consider the average of the indicator over a 3-year period.

The Commission is working within the framework of the Commission Communication 'Solidarity in Health' ([5]) to support Member States to reduce health inequalities.

Under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Member States are fully responsible for the management of health services and the allocation of resources assigned to them. European Union action must respect the responsibilities of the Member States for the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([4]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=DEMO_MINFIND
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/social_determinants/policy/commission_communication/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004572/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: L-abbuż tal-alkoħol fost in-nisa fl-UE-28

Hemm relazzjoni kumplessa bejn l-abbuż tal-alkoħol, id-dipendenza mill-alkoħol u l-mard mentali bħall-ansjetà u d-dipressjoni. Id-dipendenza mill-alkoħol b'mod partikolari ġiet konnessa ma' żieda fir-riskju ta' suwiċidju. Mewta waħda minn għaxra fost it-tfajliet ta' bejn il-15 u d-29 sena hi kkawżata mill-abbuż tal-alkoħol, li ħafna drabi hu l-kawża ta' aċċidenti, omiċidji, vjolenza jew mard tal-fwied. Il-konsum tal-alkoħol min-nisa tqal jista' jkollu impatt negattiv fuq it-tarbija fil-ġuf u jista' jirriżulta fl-Ispettru ta' Disturbi fil-Fetu kkawżati mill-Alkoħol (FASD).

1. Tista' l-Kummisjoni tagħti l-aħħar ċifri fuq in-numru ta' nisa li ngħataw trattament biex jegħlbu l-abbuż tal-alkoħol matul l-aħħar sena, mqassmin skont l-età u l-Istat Membru?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti dettalji fuq in-numru ta' nisa li t-trabi tagħhom ġew affetwati mill-FASD matul is-sena li għaddiet fl-UE-28?

3. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti l-aħħar statistika fuq in-numru ta' każijiet ta' vjolenza relatata mal-alkoħol, b'mod partikolari vjolenza domestika, li ġew irrappurtati minn nisa fl-UE-28 matul issena li għaddiet?

4. Liema strateġija ser tiġi addottata biex jiżdied l-għarfien fost il-pubbliku ġenerali, u b'mod partikolari fost in-nisa, fuq l-effetti ta' ħsara tal-abbuż tal-alkoħol, speċjalment waqt it-tqala?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-Eurostat jipprovdi dejta dwar il-ħruġ mill-isptar ta' nisa dijanjostikati b'mard mentali jew tal-imġiba minħabba l-konsum tal-alkoħol, u b'mard alkoholiku tal-fwied, għal diversi Stati Membri tal-UE ([1]).

Il-bażi tad-dejta tas-Sistema Globali ta' Informazzjoni dwar l-Alkoħol u s-Saħħa tad-WHO tipprovdi dejta dwar persuni b'mard marbut mal-konsum tal-alkoħol li qegħdin jirċievu trattament ([2]). Id-dokument "Status Report on Alcohol and Health in 35 European Countries 2013" tad-WHO jipprovdi l-frazzjoni li tista' tintrabat mal-alkoħol għal kull kategorija ta' mard (b'mod partikulari l-kanċer, iċ-ċirrożi tal-fwied u l-korriment) u għal kull età tan-nisa. Ir-rapport "Alcohol in the EU" tad-WHO jippreżenta dejta dwar il-mortalità li tista' tintrabat mal-alkoħol fost in-nisa, kif ukoll dwar il-piż tal-mard marbut mal-alkoħol skont kategoriji wiesgħa ta' mard ([3]).

Il-prevalenza għas-sindromu tal-alkoħol fetali kienet ta' 0.46 minn kull 10 000 ([4]) għall-perjodu 2008-2012 (Is-Sorveljanza Ewropea ta' Anomaliji Konġenitali ([5])).

Il-protezzjoni taż-żgħażagħ, tat-tfal u tat-trabi mhux imwielda, u t-tnaqqis tax-xorb perikoluż u ta' ħsara fost iż-żgħażagħ, huma prijoritajiet ewlenin tal-Istrateġija tal-2006 biex tappoġġja lill-Istati Membri fit-tnaqqis tal-ħsara marbuta mal-alkoħol ([6]). F'dan il-kuntest, il-Kumitat dwar il-Politika u l-Azzjoni Nazzjonali dwar l-Alkoħol bħalissa qiegħed iħejji Pjan ta' Azzjoni ta' sentejn dwar iż-żgħażagħ u l-binge drinking, li se jipprovdi referenza għall-Istati Membri u partijiet interessati oħra, biex abbażi tagħha jimplimentaw azzjonijiet biex inaqqsu, b'mod partikulari, il-binge drinking fost iż-żgħażagħ.

Filwaqt li l-Kummissjoni ma tistax tipprovdi statistiċi dwar l-għadd ta' każijiet ta' vjolenza marbuta mal-alkoħol, rapport riċenti jiddikjara li l-prevalenza tal-vjolenza minn sieħeb jew sieħba hija ogħla sew fost in-nisa li s-sieħeb tagħhom jisker ta' spiss ([7]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_care.
([2]) http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A1202?lang=en.
([3]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf?ua=1.
([4]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/accessprevalencedata/prevalencetables.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20102204.
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/MT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0625&qid=1396344271734&from=MT.
([7]) L-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali, Il-vjolenza kontra n-nisa: stħarriġ mal-UE kollha, http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004572/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Alcohol abuse among women in the EU-28

There is a complex relationship between alcohol abuse, alcohol dependence and mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression. Alcohol dependence in particular has been linked to the increased risk of suicide. 1 death in 10 among young women aged between 15 and 29 years old is due to alcohol abuse, which is often the cause of accidents, homicides, violence or liver diseases. Alcohol consumption by pregnant women can have a negative impact on the unborn child and may result in foetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD).

1. Can the Commission provide the latest figures on the number of women who have been given treatment to overcome alcohol abuse during the last year, broken down by age and Member State?

2. Can the Commission provide details on the number of women whose babies have been affected by FASD during the past year in the EU-28?

3. Can the Commission provide the latest statistics on the number of cases of alcohol-related violence, in particular domestic violence, which have been reported by women in the EU-28 during the past year?

4. What strategy will be adopted to increase awareness among the general public, and in particular among women, on the harmful effects of alcohol abuse, especially during pregnancy?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

Eurostat provides data on hospital discharges of women diagnosed with mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol, and with alcoholic liver disease for several EU Member States ([1]).

The WHO Global Information System on Alcohol and Health database further provides data on persons with alcohol use disorders receiving treatment ([2]). The WHO 'Status Report on Alcohol and Health in 35 European Countries 2013' provides the alcohol-attributable fraction by disease category (in particular cancer, liver cirrhosis and injury) and age in women. The WHO report 'Alcohol in the EU' presents data on alcohol-attributable mortality in women and on the alcohol related burden of disease by broad disease categories ([3]).

The prevalence for foetal alcohol syndrome was 0.46 per 10 000 ([4]) for 2008-2012 (European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies ([5])).

The protection of young people, children and the unborn child and the reduction of hazardous and harmful drinking among young people are key priorities of the 2006 Strategy to support Member States to reduce alcohol related harm ([6]). In this context, the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action is currently preparing a 2-year Action Plan on youth and heavy episodic drinking (binge drinking) that will provide a reference for Member States and other stakeholders to implement actions to reduce in particular heavy episodic drinking among young people.

While the Commission cannot provide statistics on the number of cases of alcohol-related violence, a recent report states that the prevalence of violence by a partner is markedly higher among women whose partner gets drunk frequently ([7]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/health_care
([2]) http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A1202?lang=en
([3]) http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/160680/e96457.pdf?ua=1
([4]) http://www.eurocat-network.eu/accessprevalencedata/prevalencetables
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20102204
([6]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0625&qid=1396344271734&from=EN
([7]) European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Violence against women: an EU-wide survey, http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results-apr14_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004573/14
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 april 2014)

Betreft: Congres over „rechts-populisme" in Duitsland

Als antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-001861/2014 en P-002076/2014 bevestigde de Commissie dat een congres in Duitsland over „rechts-populisme" financieel gesteund werd. Ze verzuimt echter mede te delen voor welk bedrag.

Hoeveel geld kreeg het bewuste congres? Werd er ook andere dan geldelijke steun verleend? Zo ja, welke?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004792/14
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(15 april 2014)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen congres „rechtspopulisme" in Duitsland

De antwoorden van de Commissie van 11 april jl. (E-001861/2014/P-002076/2014) op mijn eerdere vragen inzake een congres over „rechtspopulisme" in Duitsland geven aanleiding tot de volgende vervolgvragen:

1. De Commissie geeft aan dat de heer Barroso niet heeft deelgenomen aan het bewuste congres. Was hij wel aanwezig?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welk bedrag zij voor dit congres heeft uitgetrokken uit vermelde begrotingslijn?

3. Wordt ook een congres door de Commissie georganiseerd over de „dreiging van linkspopulisme en linksextremisme in het kader van de Europese verkiezingen"? Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Hoeveel medewerkers van de Commissie waren belast met het voorbereiden van dit congres, mede op kosten en rekening van de dagelijks toenemende groep „rechtspopulistische" belastingbetalers in Nederland?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(11 juni 2014)

1. De voorzitter van de Europese Commissie heeft het congres niet bijgewoond.

2. De Commissie heeft een bedrag van maximaal 14 967,92 EUR voor dit congres beschikbaar gesteld.

3. De Commissie is niet op de hoogte van enig ander door haar diensten georganiseerd congres over populisme en extremisme.

4. Het congres was door de Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (BpB) en de regionale vertegenwoordiging van de Commissie in Bonn gezamenlijk georganiseerd. Die vertegenwoordiging telt zes personeelsleden, die niet allen bij de voorbereiding van het congres betrokken waren. De BpB nam het grootste deel van de organisatie voor haar rekening.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004573/14
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Conference on 'right-wing populism' in Germany

In answer to Written Questions E-001861/2014 and P-002076/2014, the Commission confirmed that a conference in Germany on the subject of 'right-wing populism' was receiving financial support. However, the Commission omitted to say how much.

How much money was provided for this conference? Was support lent to it in any form other than financial? If so, how?

Question for written answer P-004792/14
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(15 April 2014)

Subject: Follow-up questions concerning conference on 'right-wing populism' in Germany

The Commission's answers of 11 April 2014 (E-001861/2014/P-002076/2014) to my previous questions concerning a conference on 'right-wing populism' in Germany give rise to the following follow-up questions:

1. The Commission indicates that Mr Barroso did not take part in the conference in question. Did he nonetheless attend it?

2. Can the Commission indicate how much funding it allocated to the conference from the budget heading to which it refers?

3. Is the Commission also organising a conference on 'the threat of left-wing populism and left-wing extremism in the context of the European elections'? If not, why not?

4. How many Commission staff were given the task of preparing for the conference, partly at the expense of the daily growing group of 'right-wing populist' tax-payers in the Netherlands?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

1. The President of the European Commission did not attend the conference.

2. The Commission allocated a maximum of EUR 14 967.92 to this conference.

3. The Commission is not aware of any other conference on populism and extremism being organised by its services.

4. The conference was co-organised by the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (BpB) and the Commission's Regional Representation in Bonn. The latter has six staff members, who were not all involved in the preparation of the conference. The BpB assumed the greater part of the organisation.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-004574/14
til Kommissionen
Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(11. april 2014)

Om: Eksport af radioaktivt affald og brugt nukleart brændsel

Vil Kommissionen bekræfte, at det inden for gældende EU-lovgivning er tilladt at eksportere radioaktivt affald og brugt nukleart brændsel med henblik på forarbejdning eller deponering, forudsat at dette sker under passende hensyn til og med garantier for dette materiales forsvarlige behandling og opbevaring i destinationslandet, jf. Rådets direktiv 2011/70/EURATOM?

Subsidiært bedes Kommissionen henvise til de konkrete bestemmelser, der måtte forhindre en sådan eksport, enten inden for det europæiske fællesskab eller til tredjeland.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Günther Oettinger
(6. juni 2014)

Medlemsstaterne har pligt til at sikre, at deres nationale retlige rammer vedrørende eksport af radioaktivt affald og brugt nukleart brændsel er i overensstemmelse med Rådets direktiv 96/29/Euratom ([1]), Rådets direktiv 2011/70/Euratom ([2]) og Rådets direktiv 2006/117/Euratom ([3]), og de skal tage højde for kriterier, der rækker ud over ansvarlig behandling og lagring af materialet i destinationslandet. Følgende retlige bestemmelser er relevante:

— Artikel 4, stk. 4, i Rådets direktiv 2011/70/Euratom fastlægger, at radioaktivt affald skal deponeres i den medlemsstat, hvor det er frembragt, medmindre en aftale mellem den pågældende medlemsstat og en anden medlemsstat eller et tredjeland om at anvende et deponeringsanlæg i et af landene er trådt i kraft på overførselstidspunktet.

— Den eksporterende medlemsstat skal underrette Kommissionen om indholdet af en sådan aftale og træffe rimelige foranstaltninger for at sikre sig, at andre betingelser er opfyldt, jf. artikel 4, stk. 4.

— Artikel 16 i Rådets direktiv 2006/117/Euratom fastsætter hvilke overførsler af brugt brændsel og radioaktivt affald medlemsstaternes kompetente myndigheder ikke må tillade.

— Desuden har Kommissionen i overensstemmelse med artikel 16, stk. 2, i Rådets direktiv 2006/117/Euratom fastsat kriterier, der skal gøre det lettere for medlemsstaterne at vurdere, om kravene til overførsel ud af Fællesskabet er opfyldt. Disse kriterier fremgår af henstilling 2008/956/Euratom ([4]).

([1]) Rådets direktiv 96/29/Euratom af 13. maj 1996 om fastsættelse af grundlæggende sikkerhedsnormer til beskyttelse af befolkningens og arbejdstagernes sundhed mod de farer, som er forbundet med ioniserende stråling, EFT L 159 af 29.6.1996. Dette direktiv blev erstattet af Rådets direktiv 2013/59/Euratom af 5. december 2013 om fastlæggelse af grundlæggende sikkerhedsnormer til beskyttelse mod de farer, som er forbundet med udsættelse for ioniserende stråling og om ophævelse af direktiv 89/618/Euratom, 90/641/Euratom, 96/29/Euratom, 97/43/Euratom og 2003/122/Euratom (EUT L 13 af 17.1.2014) Det nye grundlæggende sikkerhedsstandardsdirektiv skal gennemføres af medlemsstaterne senest den 6. februar 2018.

([2]) Rådets direktiv 2011/70/Euratom af 19. juli 2011 om fastsættelse af en fællesskabsramme for ansvarlig og sikker håndtering af brugt nukleart brændsel og radioaktivt affald EUT L 199 af 2.8.2011.

([3]) Rådets direktiv 2006/117/Euratom af 20. november 2006 om overvågning af og kontrol med overførsel af radioaktivt affald og brugt nukleart brændsel EUT L 337 af 5.12.2006.

([4]) Kommissionens henstilling af 4. december 2008 om kriterier for eksport af radioaktivt affald og brugt nukleart brændsel til tredjelande EUT L 338 af 17.12.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004574/14
to the Commission
Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Export of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel

Can the Commission confirm that, under current European law, it is permissible to export radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel for processing or disposal provided that this takes place with due consideration for, and providing guarantees of, the material's responsible treatment and storage in the country of destination (see Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom)?

Alternatively, can the Commission point to any legal provisions that might prevent such export, either within the European Union or to third countries?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

Member States have a duty to ensure that their national legal framework governing the export of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel is in accordance with Council Directive 96/29/Euratom ([1]), Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom ([2]) and Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom ([3]), and Member States need to take into account criteria that go beyond the material's responsible treatment and storage in the country of destination. The following legal provisions are relevant:

— Article 4(4) of Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom specifies that radioactive waste is to be disposed of in the Member State in which it was generated, unless at the time of shipment an agreement has entered into force between the Member State concerned and another Member State or third country to use a disposal facility in one of them.

— The exporting Member State must inform the Commission of the content of such an agreement and take reasonable measures to obtain other assurances as specified in Article 4(4).

— Article 16 of Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom specifies which shipments of spent fuel and radioactive waste shall not be authorised by the competent authorities in the Member States.

— Furthermore, the Commission has established, in accordance with Article 16(2) of Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom, criteria facilitating Member States to evaluate whether requirements for export have been met. These criteria are laid down in Recommendation 2008/956/Euratom ([4]).

([1]) Council Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13.5.1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation, OJ L 159, 29.6.1996. This directive was replaced by Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom of 5.12.2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation, and repealing Directives 89/618/Euratom, 90/641/Euratom, 96/29/Euratom, 97/43/Euratom and 2003/122/Euratom (OJ L 13, 17.1.2014). The new Basic Safety Standards Directive has to be transposed by Member States by 6.2.2018.

([2]) Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom of 19.7.2011 establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, OJ L 199, 2.8.2011.

([3]) Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom of 20.11.2006 on the supervision and control of shipments of radioactive waste and spent fuel, OJ L 337, 5.12.2006.

([4]) Commission Recommendation of 4.12.2008 on criteria for the export of radioactive waste and spent fuel to third countries, OJ L 338, 17.12.2008.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004576/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Servizio di cabotaggio tra Italia e Svizzera

La vicinanza dell'Italia, e in particolare della Lombardia, con la Svizzera offre grandi opportunità, ma allo stesso modo alcuni innegabili problemi.

Per quanto riguarda la categoria di servizio di noleggio con conducente (di seguito NCC), gli accordi bilaterali del 21 giugno 1999 tra la Confederazione elvetica e l'Unione europea in materia di trasporti terrestri, consentono ai vettori italiani e svizzeri di offrire, oltre ai servizi interni nei rispettivi Stati, servizi transfrontalieri.

Purtroppo, ultimamente, i vettori italiani si trovano di fronte a pratiche di dumping, di concorrenza sleale e distorta, di violazione del principio di libera circolazione delle persone, oltre che a una disparità normativa e sanzionatoria tra i due paesi: difatti sono sempre di più i vettori svizzeri che offrono i loro servizi non soltanto per trasporti interni alla Svizzera o transfrontalieri, ma anche interamente all'interno dei confini italiani. Tutto ciò è documentabile anche dalla numerosa pubblicità apparsa sui principali motori di ricerca internazionali.

Molti vettori svizzeri in realtà appartengono a cittadini italiani (o a prestanome svizzeri) che hanno aperto la loro attività in Svizzera approfittando della fiscalità più bassa, della non assoggettabilità all'IVA dei servizi da fatturarsi e dei costi di gestione più bassi (in Svizzera non serve acquistare la licenza, bastano degli appositi permessi). Tra i due paesi vi è disparità normativa e sanzionatoria e, in seno agli operatori già in difficoltà a causa dell'attuale congiuntura economica, tale situazione crea allarmanti tensioni sociali e un diffuso clima di scontro.

Alla luce di quanto precede può la Commissione far sapere quali azioni intende intraprendere affinché vengano rispettati gli accordi bilaterali e venga così ripristinato il principio di reciprocità?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

L'articolo 14 dell'accordo relativo al trasporto terrestre tra l'UE e la Confederazione svizzera del 1999 ([1]) non autorizza il trasporto fra due punti situati nel territorio di uno Stato membro con un veicolo immatricolato in Svizzera (cabotaggio). I vettori svizzeri non sono pertanto autorizzati a offrire i propri servizi interamente sul territorio italiano. Spetta alle autorità italiane garantire il rispetto di dette norme.

Per quanto riguarda l'accesso alla professione di trasportatore su strada, la Svizzera applica attualmente disposizioni giuridiche equivalenti alle norme stabilite dalla direttiva 96/26/CE del Consiglio ([2]), modificata dalla direttiva 98/76/CE ([3]). Nel corso del 2014 la Svizzera intende adeguare la propria legislazione in materia per equipararla al regolamento (CE) n. 1071/2009 ([4]) che ha abrogato e sostituito la direttiva 96/26/CE.

([1]) GU L 114 del 30.04.2002.
([2]) GU L 124 del 23.5.1996.
([3]) GU L 277 del 14.10.1998.
([4]) GU L 300 del 14.11.2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004576/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Cabotage service between Italy and Switzerland

Italy's proximity to Switzerland presents big opportunities, especially to Lombardy, but also leads to undeniable problems.

Regarding 'hire with driver' as a service category, the bilateral agreement of 21 June 1999 between the Swiss Confederation and the European Union on Overland Transport allows Italian and Swiss carriers to run services across borders, as well as within their respective countries.

Unfortunately, Italian carriers have recently faced practices of dumping, unfair and distorted competition, violation of the principle of the free movement of persons, and disparities in rules and penalties between the two countries. In fact growing numbers of Swiss carriers are offering their services not only within Switzerland or across borders, but entirely within Italy's borders. All this can be documented from the many advertisements on the main international search engines, and elsewhere.

In reality, many Swiss carrier firms belong to Italian citizens (or to Swiss figureheads) who have commenced trading in Switzerland to profit from lower taxation, exemption of billable services from VAT, and lower operating costs. In Switzerland, there is no need for a licence: permits are sufficient. Among carriers already in difficulty through the present economic climate, this situation is creating alarming social tensions and a widespread atmosphere of confrontation.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state what action it intends to take to ensure compliance with the bilateral agreements and thereby reinstate the principle of reciprocity?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Article 14 of the Land Transport Agreement between the EU and Switzerland of 1999 ([1]) does not authorise transport between two points situated on the territory of a Member State by a Swiss-registered vehicle (cabotage). Swiss carriers are therefore not allowed to offer their services entirely within Italy's borders. It is up to the Italian authorities to enforce these rules.

In terms of access to the occupation of road haulage operator, Switzerland currently applies legal provisions equivalent to those of Council Directive 96/26/EC ([2]), as last amended by Directive 98/76/EC. ([3]) In the course of 2014, Switzerland intends to adapt its relevant legislation for it to be equivalent to Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 ([4]) which repealed and replaced Directive 96/26/EC.

([1]) OJ L 114, 30.4.2002.
([2]) OJ L 124, 23.5.1996.
([3]) OJ L 277, 14.10.1998.
([4]) OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004577/14
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 april 2014)

Betreft: Arbeidsgeneesheer bij de Commissie

Beschikt de Commissie over een arbeidsgeneesheer, die als dusdanig ook erkend is door de Belgische Orde van Geneesheren, voor haar diensten in Brussel?

Antwoord van de heer Barroso namens de Commissie
(22 mei 2014)

Alle geneesheren die in Brussel voor de medische dienst van de Commissie werken, zijn bevoegd om hun beroep uit te oefenen in minstens een van de lidstaten van de Unie.

Wat de vraag in kwestie betreft, bestaat er geen wettelijke verplichting voor geneesheren om door een medische beroepsorganisatie te worden erkend om voor de Europese instellingen te kunnen werken. Wij kunnen echter bevestigen dat de overgrote meerderheid van de arbeidsgeneesheren die voor de Commissie in Brussel werken inderdaad door de Belgische Orde van Geneesheren wordt erkend.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004577/14
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: In-house medical officer at the Commission

Does the Commission have an in-house medical officer for its staff in Brussels who is also recognised as such by the Belgian Medical Association?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

All the medical officers working in the Commission medical service in Brussels are authorised to practice medicine in at least one of the Member States of the Union.

As to the specific question asked, notwithstanding the fact that there is no statutory obligation to be recognised by a medical association in order to practise medicine in the European institutions, we can confirm that the vast majority of the in-house medical officers in the Brussels Commission medical service are indeed registered by the Belgian Medical Association.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004578/14
aan de Commissie
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 april 2014)

Betreft: Pesterijen op het werk bij de Commissie

Kan de Commissie meedelen hoeveel gevallen van pesterijen op het werk er binnen haar eigen diensten werden gemeld, voor de jaren 2011, 2012 en 2013?

Hoeveel gevallen gaven aanleiding tot gerechtelijke stappen?

Welke procedure bestaat er binnen de Commissie voor de opvolging van klachten over pesterijen?

Leiden dergelijke klachten automatisch tot overplaatsing naar een andere dienst, wanneer dat gevraagd wordt door de slachtoffers van pesterijen? Zo neen, waarom niet?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(6 juni 2014)

1) In 2011, 2012 en 2013 werden respectievelijk 12, 17 en 6 formele procedures opgestart naar aanleiding van vermoedelijke gevallen van pesterij.

2) Twee zaken werden bij het Gerecht voor ambtenarenzaken aanhangig gemaakt: één zaak in 2011 en één zaak in 2014 (stopgezet na een minnelijke schikking).

3) In Besluit C(2006) 1624/3 van de Commissie van 26 april 2006 (hierna „het besluit" genoemd) wordt bepaald dat elk personeelslid dat onder het EU-ambtenarenstatuut valt en meent dat hij/zij het slachtoffer is van psychologische of seksuele intimidatie, het recht heeft om een formele procedure op te starten. Vervolgens analyseert de administratie deze aanvraag en kan zij overgaan tot een onderzoek om de noodzakelijke feiten te achterhalen en disciplinaire verantwoordelijkheid toe te wijzen. Het besluit voorziet ook in een informele procedure die tot doel heeft om tot een minnelijke schikking te komen. Het doel van de informele procedure is niet om een oordeel te vellen in elke specifieke situatie, maar om steun te bieden aan het vermoedelijke slachtoffer.

4) Het besluit voorziet ook in de mogelijkheid om noodmaatregelen te treffen, d.w.z. een overplaatsing van een van de betrokken partijen (binnen het DG van tewerkstelling of naar een ander DG). Deze voorzorgsmaatregelen moeten een bestaande situatie beëindigen en het (vermoedelijke) slachtoffer bescherming bieden als er aanwijzingen zijn van pesterij. In deze fase is het echter nog niet nodig om pesterij als dusdanig te bewijzen. In principe krijgen aanvragen tot overplaatsing een positief antwoord van de administratie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004578/14
to the Commission
Philip Claeys (NI)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Harassment in the workplace at the Commission

Can the Commission indicate how many cases of harassment in the workplace were reported within its own services in 2011, 2012 and 2013?

How many cases resulted in judicial action?

What procedure exists within the Commission to follow up complaints about harassment?

Do such complaints automatically result in transfer to a different department if the victims of the harassment so request? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

1. The number of formal procedures launched re alleged cases of harassment in 2011, 2012 and 2013 were respectively 12, 17 and 6.

2. Two cases were lodged before the Civil Service Tribunal: one in 2011 and in one 2014 (withdrawn following an amicable settlement).

3. The Commission Decision C (2006) 1624/3 of 26 April 2006 ('the decision') stipulates that any member of staff covered by the Staff Regulations who feels they are the victim of psychological harassment or sexual harassment is entitled to initiate a formal procedure. The administration analyses the request and may carry out an inquiry to establish the facts and consider disciplinary responsibility. The decision also includes an informal procedure, aimed at finding an amicable solution. The aim of the informal procedure is not to qualify the situation at hand, but to offer support to the alleged victim.

4. The decision provides for the possibility to apply emergency measures, i.e. a transfer of one of the parties concerned (within the DG or to another DG). These precautionary measures are designed to put an end to a given situation and to protect the victim/alleged victim when there are signs of harassment, although harassment as such does not have to be proved at this stage. Requests for a transfer are in principle responded to favourably by the administration.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004579/14
an die Kommission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11. April 2014)

Betrifft: EU Förderung für die Errichtung einer Wundpflasterfabrik, Human Bio-Science (HBS), Luckenwalde verschwunden

Für das EU-Projekt Human BioScience GmbH (HBS), Luckenwalde, zur Errichtung einer Wundpflasterfabrik wurden 13,6 Mio. EUR bewilligt, wovon 6,5 Mio. EUR bereits geflossen sind. Der Firmeninhaber der HBS wurde bereits 2004 wegen Steuerbetrug verurteilt. Die Haushaltsordnung verpflichtet die Kommission dazu, sich von der Integrität des Projektträgers zu überzeugen.

1. Warum hat die Kommission nicht sichergestellt, dass sich die verantwortlichen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten von der Integrität von Projektträgern überzeugen, obwohl deren einschlägige Verurteilungen im Internet mit wenigen Klicks verfügbar waren?

2. An die Projektträger wurden 30 Barschecks mit je zwischen ca. 400 000 und ca. 500 000 EUR zur Abrechnung der EU Gelder übergeben. Wie hat die Kommission auf diesen mehrfachen Verstoß gegen europäisches Recht reagiert? Wie hoch ist der Verlust für den europäischen Steuerzahler? Welche weiteren Schritte unternimmt die Kommission jetzt? Wann werden die Gelder vom Land Brandenburg wiedereingezogen?

3. Im Jahr 2012 erstellte die brandenburgische Prüfbehörde einen Prüfbericht im Auftrag der EU. Dieser Prüfbericht enthält mehrere Fehlinformationen etwa zu Geldflüssen und angeschafftem Anlagevermögen. Warum hat die GD REGIO kein eigenes Audit durchgeführt, obwohl Mittel in den operationellen Programmen des Landes Brandenburg wegen Unregelmäßigkeiten gesperrt waren?

4. In dem Fall gab es mehrere Verhaftungen. Ein Gerichtsverfahren steht unmittelbar bevor. Wird die EU-Kommission dem Land Brandenburg trotz dieser strafrechtlich relevanten Vorkommnisse erlauben, dieses Geld in andere Projekte zu verschieben?

Antwort von Herrn Hahn im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2014)

1. Es handelt sich um ein Projekt unter geteilter Mittelverwaltung: in erster Linie ist das Land für die Projektauswahl und Kontrolle (inkl. Audit) verantwortlich. Der „Projektträger" ist die Human BioSciences GmbH. Gegen einen Initiator des Projektes ist in den USA in 2004 ein Strafverfahren anhängig gewesen und bereits 2006 eingestellt worden. Die besagte Person trat ausschließlich als Berater des Unternehmens auf.

2. Die Angaben sind nicht richtig, die Bewilligungsbehörde hat keine Barschecks an den Projektträger übergeben. Eine Auszahlung von Fördermitteln erfolgt ausschließlich per Überweisung. Somit gibt es keinen Verlust für den europäischen Steuerzahler.

3. Die brandenburgische Prüfbehörde hat 2012 im Rahmen ihrer jährlichen stichprobenbasierten Prüfungen die im Vorjahr für den Förderfall HBS gemeldeten Ausgaben — inklusive der Geldflüsse — überprüft.

Die Zahlungswege durch den Zuwendungsempfänger konnten mit Originalbelegen nachgewiesen werden. Nur ein nicht abgezogener Skontobetrag (unter 10 EUR), sowie ein Differenzbetrag bei der Bezahlung einer Rechnung in Höhe von 427 EUR wurden beanstandet und korrigiert.

4. Nach den bisherigen Ergebnissen der Ermittlungen der Staatsanwaltschaft Potsdam ist eine baldige Anklageerhebung gegen die Hauptverantwortlichen der HBS vor dem Landgericht Potsdam wahrscheinlich. Gestrichene EU-Mittel darf ein Bundesland nach EG-Verordnung 1083/2006 in andere Projekte investieren.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004579/14
to the Commission
Ingeborg Gräßle (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Disappearance of EU funding for the Luckenwalde-based Human BioSciences (HBS) wound care dressing factory

A total of EUR 13.6 million has been granted to the Luckenwalde-based firm Human BioSciences GmbH (HBS) for a project to build a wound care dressing factory; EUR 6.5 million has already been paid out. The owner of HBS was convicted of tax fraud back in 2004. By virtue of its obligations under the Financial Regulation, the Commission has to satisfy itself as to a project manager's integrity.

1. Why has the Commission failed to make sure that the proper national authorities establish that project managers are honest, given that that information about previous convictions can be obtained on the Internet with just a few clicks?

2. The project managers in this case received 30 cashable cheques for amounts in the region of EUR 400 000 to EUR 500 000 by way of EU funding. What has been the Commission's response to this repeated infringement of European law? What is the extent of the loss to European taxpayers? What further steps is the Commission taking now? When will the *Land* of Brandenburg recover the money?

3. In 2012 the Brandenburg audit authority drew up an audit report for the EU. The report contains a number of inaccuracies, for instance regarding cash flows and assets acquired. Why has DG REGIO not conducted its own audit, bearing in mind that funding available under the Brandenburg operational programmes has been blocked on account of irregularities?

4. Several people have been arrested in connection with this case. Court proceedings are about to start. Will the Commission allow Brandenburg — even though the case has become a criminal law matter — to transfer the money concerned to other projects?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. This project is under shared management — the Land is primarily responsible for project selection and monitoring (including audits). The 'project promoter' is Human BioSciences GmbH. Criminal proceedings were pending in 2004 against one of the initiators of the project. Those proceedings were then stayed in 2006. The person in question was only a consultant of the company.

2. That information is not correct; the granting authority did not give the project promotors any cashable cheques. Funds are paid exclusively by bank transfer. There is therefore no loss to European taxpayers.

3. In 2012 the Brandenburg audit authority reviewed the expenditure declared for the HBS case for the previous year — including the cash flows — within the scope of its annual sample-based audits.

The methods of payment through the recipients were able to be verified by original documents. The only matters queried were one discount amount (under EUR 10) and different amounts in respect of the payment of an invoice for the sum of EUR 427 EUR, and these were corrected.

4. According to the earlier outcome of the investigations by the Public Prosecutor's Office of Potsdam, it is likely that the persons in HBS mainly responsible will be indicted soon. Cancelled EU funds may be invested by a Land in other projects pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004580/14
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Tendering process for Ireland's national postcode system

Can the Commission state whether it investigated the tendering process for Ireland's national postcode system, and what the status of that investigation was? Can it also summarise the main findings and outline when and how the results of the investigation were communicated to the Irish Government?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

The Commission has received a complaint regarding the tendering procedure in question. It conducted an investigation into the matter.

After having received the requested clarifications from the Irish authorities, the Commission closed the file. Based on the available information, the Commission departments could not establish any violation of EU public procurement law that would justify the opening of an infringement procedure.

The above findings were communicated to the complainant on 11 November 2013 via an administrative letter. The same findings were communicated to the Irish authorities on 20 November 2013 via the online information exchange platform for infringement procedures ('EU Pilot').

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004582/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αλλαγές στο νόμο για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των ελληνικών τραπεζών

Σε απάντηση της Επιτροπής (E-001245/2014) σε ερώτησή μου για τις αλλαγές που προωθεί η ελληνική κυβέρνηση στο καταστατικό του ελληνικού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (ΤΧΣ), ο Επίτροπος Ρεν απάντησε ότι «Η Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει νομοθεσία που βρίσκεται στο στάδιο της προετοιμασίας σε εθνικό επίπεδο». Με δεδομένο ότι στις 30.4.2014 η ελληνική Βουλή ψήφισε μια σειρά από μέτρα οικονομικής πολιτικής, μεταξύ των οποίων και την εν λόγω διάταξη για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των τραπεζών, που ορίζει ότι «Η τιμή διάθεσης στον ιδιωτικό τομέα δύναται να είναι χαμηλότερη της τιμής προηγούμενων καλύψεων μετοχών από το Ταμείο ή της τρέχουσας χρηματιστηριακής τιμής», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Μπορεί να σχολιάσει τη συγκεκριμένη διάταξη για την ανακεφαλαιοποίηση των ελληνικών τραπεζών, με την οποία το ελληνικό δημόσιο, μέσω του ΤΧΣ, θα εγγράφει ζημιές κατά τη διαδικασία ανακεφαλαιοποίησης;

2. Υπάρχει συγκεκριμένη οικονομική ανάγκη που επιβάλλει την πώληση των ελληνικών τραπεζών με ζημιά; Μήπως έχει διαπιστωθεί από την Επιτροπή κάποιο ιδιαίτερο επενδυτικό ενδιαφέρον για την αγορά ελληνικών τραπεζών, σε τιμές κάτω του κόστους ανακεφαλαιοποίησης; Εάν ναι, για ποιες τράπεζες;

3. Σε ποιες άλλες χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης υπάρχουν ανάλογες νομοθετικές ρυθμίσεις, με τις οποίες επιτρέπεται η εγγραφή ζημιών, κατά τις διαδικασίες ανακεφαλαιοποίησης των τραπεζών, στα αντίστοιχα Ταμεία Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιουνίου 2014)

Σκοπός ([1]) του Ελληνικού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας (ΕΤΧΣ) ([2]) είναι να συνεισφέρει στη διατήρηση της σταθερότητας του ελληνικού τραπεζικού συστήματος, και προς επίτευξη του στόχου αυτού, να παράσχει κεφαλαιακή στήριξη σε βιώσιμα πιστωτικά ιδρύματα μέχρι του ποσού του κεφαλαιακού ελλείμματος, όπως αυτό καθορίζεται από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος ([3]), εφόσον ο ιδιωτικός τομέας δεν μπορεί το να καλύψει πλήρως. Δεδομένου ότι το ποσό και ο χρόνος των εισφορών κεφαλαίου καθορίζονται από την Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος και ότι το ΕΤΧΣ παρέχει κεφάλαια μόνο μετά από ενδεχόμενη συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα, το Ταμείο δεν έχει την εξουσία να καθορίσει το χρονοδιάγραμμα αυξήσεων του κεφαλαίου των τραπεζών. Οι αυξήσεις κεφαλαίου, όπως ζήτησε η Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος, πρέπει να πραγματοποιηθούν. Σε αντίθετη περίπτωση, αυτό θα σήμαινε μη συμμόρφωση προς τις κανονιστικές απαιτήσεις, γεγονός που θα μπορούσε να πλήξει την εμπιστοσύνη σε ορισμένες τράπεζες ή το σύστημα στο σύνολό του.

Οι τιμές προεγγραφής για τον ιδιωτικό τομέα μπορούν να είναι χαμηλότερες ή υψηλότερες σε σύγκριση με τις τιμές προεγγραφής που κατέβαλε αρχικά το ΕΤΧΣ για να συμμετάσχει στο μετοχικό κεφάλαιο των τραπεζών. Το ΕΤΧΣ ορίζει μια ελάχιστη τιμή προεγγραφής των μετοχών που πρόκειται να αναληφθούν από τους ιδιώτες επενδυτές. Η απόφαση πρέπει να βασίζεται σε δύο εκθέσεις αποτίμησης που διενεργούνται από δύο ανεξάρτητους χρηματοοικονομικούς συμβούλους ([4]) και το ΕΤΧΣ πρέπει να λαμβάνει υπόψη τον σκοπό του σε συνδυασμό με τις συνθήκες και τους όρους που επικρατούν στην αγορά κατά τον χρόνο πραγματοποίησης της αύξησης κεφαλαίου.

Το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο και η Ισπανία αποτελούν παραδείγματα κρατών μελών με πλαίσια παρόμοια με το ΕΤΧΣ, δηλαδή το UKFI ([5]) και το FROB ([6]), αντίστοιχα, σύμφωνα με τα οποία δεν υφίστανται νομικοί περιορισμοί για τη διάθεση συμμετοχών στο κεφάλαιο σε οποιαδήποτε τιμή.

([1]) Νόμος 3864/2010 — άρθρα 2 και 6.
([2]) Ελληνικό Ταμείο Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας.
([3]) Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος.
([4]) Νόμος 3864/2010 — άρθρο 7 παράγραφος 5 πρώτο εδάφιο.
([5]) UK Financial Investments Ltd.
([6]) Ταμείο για την ομαλή αναδιάρθρωση του τραπεζικού κλάδου (Fund of Orderly Bank Restructuring).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004582/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Changes to the law on the recapitalisation of Greek banks

In the Commission's answer to my question (E-001245/2014) on changes to the law governing the Greek Financial Stability Fund, Commissioner Rehn stated that: 'The Commission does not comment on legislation under preparation at the national level'

Given that on 30 April 2014 the Hellenic Parliament adopted a series of financial policy measures, including the provision in question on the recapitalisation of Greek banks, which states that 'the issue price in the private sector may be lower than the price of previous share coverage by the Fund or the current market price', will the Commission say:

1. Can it comment on the specific provision governing the recapitalisation of Greek banks, by which the Greek Government, acting through the FSF, will enter losses during the recapitalisation process?

2. Is there any specific financial need that requires the sale of Greek banks at a loss? Has the Commission identified particular investor interest in buying Greek banks at prices below the cost of recapitalisation? If so, which banks?

3. Which other EU countries have similar legislation permitting losses to be entered with the respective Financial Stability Fund during the process of bank recapitalisation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The objective ([1]) of the HFSF ([2]) is to contribute to the maintenance of the stability of the Greek banking system, and in pursuing its objective, to provide capital support to viable credit institutions up to the amount of the capital shortfall determined by the BoG ([3]) if the private sector cannot cover it in full. Given that the amount and the time of the capital injections are set by the BoG and that the HFSF provides capital only after any participation of the private sector, the Fund does not have the power to determine the timing of banks' capital increases. The capital increases as requested by the BoG have to take place. Otherwise, it would mean non-compliance with the regulatory requirements which could damage the confidence in certain banks or the system as a whole.

The subscription prices by the private sector could be lower or higher compared to the subscription prices that the HFSF paid to enter the banks initially. The HFSF determines a minimum subscription price of the shares to be subscribed by the private investors. The decision must be based on two valuation reports conducted by two independent financial advisors ([4]) and the HFSF has to take into consideration its objective along with the prevailing, at the time of the capital increase, market terms and conditions.

The UK and Spain are examples of Member States with similar frameworks to the HFSF, namely the UKFI ([5]) and FROB ([6]), respectively, whereby there are no legal constraints to the disposal of holdings at any price.

([1]) Law 3864/2010 — Art. 2 & 6.
([2]) Hellenic Financial Stability Fund.
([3]) Bank of Greece.
([4]) Law 3864/2010 — Art. 7 par 5 (a).
([5]) UK Financial Investments Ltd.
([6]) Fund of Orderly Bank Restructuring.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004583/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Directive on medical sharps

What is the Commission's assessment of the Irish authorities' measures to transpose Council Directive 2010/32/EU of 10 May 2010 implementing the framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by HOSPEEM and EPSU?

What action has the Commission taken, or will it take, to ensure the full and correct transposition and implementation of this directive in Ireland, and in all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The deadline for the Member States to transpose Directive 2010/32/EU ([1]) into their national law expired on 11 May 2013.

The Commission has initiated infringement procedures against several Member States, including Ireland, for their failure to communicate any or all of their national measures transposing the directive. On 20 and 21 March 2014, Ireland officially communicated its national measures transposing Directive 2010/32/EU to the Commission.

An assessment of the conformity with the directive of the national transposing measures communicated to date by the Member States, including Ireland, is currently in progress. As the findings emerge, the Commission departments intend to contact the authorities of some Member States for further clarifications.

Where appropriate, the Commission will then consider initiating further infringement procedures for any non-conformity of Member State measures transposing the directive.

([1]) Council Directive 2010/32/EU of 10.5.2010 implementing the framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by Hospeem and EPSU, OJ L 134, 1.6.2010, p. 66.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004584/14
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Child car seat safety

One of my constituents found the experience of hiring a car seat for a child in Spain and Portugal both unsafe and unsatisfactory. The constituent was unsure who to contact.

EU rules state that seat belts must be used in all motorised vehicles, with children over 1.35 metres using an adult seat belt and those under 1.35 metres using appropriate equipment for their size and weight.

EU Directive 91/671/EEC requires Member States to ensure that the above rules are implemented. Can the Commission confirm how well this directive is being implemented by the Member States?

Can the Commission also confirm whether it is aware that standards may differ between private cars and those on the rental market?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission is not aware of any particular problems concerning the implementation of Directive 91/671/EEC ([1]) on the compulsory use of safety belts and child restraint systems in vehicles, which as the Honourable Member points out requires that children traveling in a motor vehicle use an appropriate child restraint system when their height is below 135 cm.

The same technical requirements apply to all vehicles registered in the European Union, in particular to safety belts and child restraint systems fitted to those vehicles, and also to child restraint systems provided separately to be used in motor vehicles. These requirements do not depend on the use of the vehicle; they are the same for private use and for the rental market.

([1]) OJ L 373, 31.12.91, p. 26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004585/14
to the Commission
Catherine Bearder (ALDE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Colombian Trade Agreement

The Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos, recently removed Gustavo Petro from his position as the Mayor of Bogota over the alleged mismanagement of waste collection. On 18 March 2014, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ruled that the dismissal violated Gustavo Petro's rights.

In the run-up to the signing of the Trade Agreement between the EU and Colombia and Peru, Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht stated that the protection of human rights is always central to the EU's relationship with Colombia and Peru.

Commissioner De Gucht said that 'the very first article of the text states that respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and fundamental human rights is an essential element of the agreement. If a government violates this essential element, the European Union, Colombia or Peru would be able immediately to suspend the benefits of the agreement to that government's country. I do not see how this could be expressed more clearly or strongly'.

In light of this statement and following the removal of Gustavo Petro from the position of Mayor of Bogota, will the Commission confirm whether it is planning to review or suspend the Trade Agreement between the EU and Columbia and Peru?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission attaches great importance to human rights and democratic principles in our partner countries. This is obviously also the case for Colombia, with whom the Commission has developed a comprehensive toolbox for engaging on these matters. This involves annual high level dialogues, regular contacts at technical level, ad hoc encounters on specific issues of concern as well as cooperation initiatives through various programmes available under EU financial instruments.

As to the specific case of Mr Gustavo Petro, the Commission, and in particular the EU Delegation in Bogotá, is closely following developments. The Commission understands that domestic legal procedures continued in the meantime, which resulted in President Santos reinstating Mr Petro as the mayor of Bogotá.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004586/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Exporting of wild-caught primates and apes from Mauritius

Will the European External Action Service (EEAS) comment on allegations that wild-caught primates and apes are being cruelly exported from Mauritius for laboratory research in the EU? Can the Commission determine the validity of the following horrific allegations:

— that wild-caught primates and apes are snatched, handled and processed in a dangerous manner, and then cruelly put in cramped breeding, weaning, export and transport cages;

— that wild-caught primates and apes are often used for breeding in captivity, so that breeders can take advantage of loopholes to restock their factory farms, while the laboratories themselves can claim that they do not use wild-caught animals;

— that primates and apes are transported around the world for experimentation and research purposes in small, dark wooden crates that are not big enough for the primate to stand up in, and that in most instances the primates are cowering and extremely frightened upon arrival at their destination after a long international flight;

— that when they finally reach their destination they face the greater ordeal of being subjected to a barrage of painful laboratory experiments, which see these intelligent, sentient and gentle animals fall victim to procedures such as neurology tests (in which monkeys may have bolts and electrodes permanently implanted into their heads) and deprivation of food and water.

Would the EEAS respond by outlining what action it has taken, or will take, to end this cruel practice, and whether it has been in contact with the authorities in Mauritius to set best practice benchmarks and moral guidelines for overseas primate suppliers?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2014)

The EU is aware that Mauritius is one of the world's largest exporters of live non-human primates, destined to medical research.

Under the Mauritian Veterinary Services Act, authority is given to private firms to capture, breed, and export monkeys. At this point there are half a dozen companies authorised to export non-human primates, only two major Mauritian companies are effectively involved in this trade. Both are accredited with the international body Assessment and Accreditation of laboratory Animal Care International Association.

If excesses in treatment Are reported during capture, breeding and transport of the non-human primates, these should be investigated by competent Mauritian authorities.

Directive 2010/63 on the Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes allows the use of non-human primates in the EU only under specific limited conditions However, the directive does not regulate the care, transport or use of animals outside the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004587/14
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Zoophilia

A West-Midlands constituent of mine has alerted me to the fact that many Member States still allow the practice of bestiality and the dissemination of animal pornography. The countries cited include Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Hungary. Whilst I am aware that decisions on this issue are taken at Member State level, can the Commission inform me of any measures taken or pressure brought to bear on these countries to help eradicate this flagrant abuse of animal welfare standards in Europe?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission would like to refer to its reply to Written Question E-2512/2014 ([1]) on the same subject.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-002512&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004588/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG)

Con riferimento alle seguenti interrogazioni, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti e indicare:

1. quante volte il Fondo è stato attivato dal 2007 ad oggi a favore di:

Austria (E-007262/2010); Belgio (E-007263/2010); Bulgaria (E-007264/2010)

Cipro (E-007265/2010); Danimarca (E-007266/2010); Estonia (E-007267/2010)

Finlandia (E-007268/2010); Francia (E-007269/2010); Germania (E-007270/2010)

Paesi Bassi (E-007278/2010); Polonia (E-007279/2010); Portogallo (E-007280/2010)

Lettonia (E-007274/2010); Lituania (E-007275/2010); Lussemburgo (E-007276/2010)

Malta (E-007277/2010); Regno Unito (E-007281/2010); Slovenia (E-007285/2010)

Svezia (E-007287/2010); Ungheria (E-007288/2010); Repubblica Ceca (E-007282/2010)

Romania (E-007283/2010) e Slovacchia (E-007284/2010)?

2. quali sono i settori interessati?

3. quanti sono i lavoratori complessivamente coinvolti?

4. qual è la tipologia dei progetti sostenuti?

5. qual è l'ammontare complessivo delle risorse erogate?

6. qual è il tasso di reinserimento dei lavoratori che hanno beneficiato delle misure del FEG nel mercato del lavoro austriaco?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

Il numero di domande ricevute sinora dai paesi elencati nell'interrogazione dell'Onorevole deputata è riportato nell'allegato 1.

Dall'inizio della sua attività nel 2007 il FEG ha ricevuto 120 domande. Il Fondo è stato mobilitato per 104 di tali domande, una domanda è stata respinta e 15 sono attualmente in corso di esame ad opera della Commissione. Delle 120 domande, 67 sono legate alla crisi e 57 ai flussi commerciali. Sono stati richiesti circa 500 milioni di EUR (dei quali 428,9 milioni sono già stati versati) per aiutare 107 041 lavoratori.

Le domande d'intervento del FEG sono state presentate per aiutare i lavoratori messi in esubero in 41 settori (cfr. l'allegato 2).

I lavoratori sono stati sostenuti con i seguenti tipi di misure: assistenza individuale nella ricerca di un nuovo lavoro, servizi di gestione del caso e d'informazione generale; formazione e riqualificazione; rotazione del lavoro e lavoro condiviso (job rotation e job sharing); incentivi all'occupazione e all'assunzione; occupazione protetta e assistita e reinserimento; creazione diretta di posti di lavoro; promozione dell'imprenditorialità; investimenti per l'avvio di imprese e per il lavoro autonomo; diversi tipi di indennità come indennità per la ricerca di un lavoro, indennità di formazione, indennità di mobilità, indennità di mantenimento delle persone in formazione o inserite in altre misure attive del mercato del lavoro nonché indennità per finalità specifiche e/o per determinati gruppi di destinatari.

Il tasso di reinserimento nel mondo del lavoro dei lavoratori che hanno beneficiato delle misure del FEG in Austria (stando alle tre relazioni finali ricevute sinora) è pari al 43,9 %.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004588/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)

Can the Commission please answer the following questions with the latest information?

1. How many times has the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund been activated since 2007 for:

Austria (E-007262/2010); Belgium (E-007263/2010); Bulgaria (E-007264/2010); Cyprus (E-007265/2010); Czech Republic (E-007282/2010); Denmark (E-007266/2010); Estonia (E-007267/2010); Finland (E-007268/2010); France (E-007269/2010); Germany (E-007270/2010); Hungary (E-007288/2010); Latvia (E-007274/2010); Lithuania (E-007275/2010); Luxembourg (E-007276/2010); Malta (E-007277/2010); Netherlands (E-007278/2010); Poland (E-007279/2010); Portugal (E-007280/2010); Romania (E-007283/2010); Slovakia (E-007284/2010); Slovenia (E-007285/2010); Sweden (E-007287/2010); and United Kingdom (E-007281/2010)?

2. Which sectors have been affected?

3. How many workers have been involved overall?

4. What types of projects have been supported?

5. What is the total sum paid out?

6. What is the re-employment rate for workers benefiting from EGF measures in the Austrian job market?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The number of applications received so far from the countries listed in the question of the Honourable Member is presented in Annex1.

Since the start of its operations in 2007, the EGF has received 120 applications. The Fund was mobilised for 104 of the applications, one application was rejected and 15 are currently being assessed by the Commission. Of the 120 applications, 67 are crisis-related and 57 are trade-related. Some EUR 500 million has been requested (of which EUR 428.9 million have already been paid out) to help 107 041 workers.

EGF applications have been presented to help workers made redundant in 41 sectors (see Annex 2)

The workers have been provided with the following types of measures: Individual job search assistance, case management and general information services; training and re-training; job rotation and job sharing; employment and recruitment incentives; sheltered and supported employment & rehabilitation; direct job creation; promotion of entrepreneurship; investments for business start-ups and self-employment; various types of allowances such as job search allowances, training allowances, mobility allowances, subsistence allowances while in training or in other active labour market measures and allowances for specific reasons and/or target groups.

The re-employment rate for workers who benefited from EGF measures in Austria (in the three final reports received so far) is 43.9%.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004590/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Frutti di bosco surgelati o congelati ed epatite A

Ogni due giorni cinque persone sono ricoverate in ospedale per epatite A, causata dall'ingestione di alimenti contenenti frutti di bosco surgelati o congelati. È quanto emerge dall'ultima relazione del Ministero della salute sull'epidemia che da 14 mesi ha riguardato l'Italia. I numeri non lasciano spazio a dubbi, le persone colpite dal gennaio 2013 alla fine di febbraio di quest'anno sono state 1.463.

Siamo di fronte a un'epidemia classificata dall'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare come internazionale, che ha coinvolto oltre a quattro paesi dell'Europa settentrionale dove si sono registrati 71 casi (Danimarca, Svezia, Norvegia e Finlandia), anche Irlanda e Francia con altri 16 episodi tutti associati all'ingestione di frutti di bosco.

L'aspetto sconvolgente di questa storia è che la grande maggioranza delle persone continua a mangiare tranquillamente frutti di bosco (more, ribes rosso, mirtillo e lamponi) presenti nelle torte, nei pasticcini e nei gelati, ignara del rischio di ammalarsi. La problematica non riguarda solo i consumi domestici, ma soprattutto i dolci consumati in ristoranti, pizzerie e altri esercizi commerciali.

Dopo un anno di ricerche e di analisi la task force creata dal Ministero della salute per individuare l'origine dell'epidemia non ha sortito risultati. Gli esperti sembrano escludere l'ipotesi che sia stato un singolo ingrediente ad avere originato la contaminazione. Si pensa a un gruppo di produttori di una stessa area geografica e a una successiva contaminazione nei centri di lavorazione o di smistamento della filiera distributiva.

Può la Commissione chiarire per quali motivi non sono stati richiamati i lotti di aziende che producono dolci o torte con frutti di bosco surgelati, distribuiti a ristoranti, pizzerie e altri esercizi commerciali?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rinvia gli onorevoli deputati alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-003896/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004590/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Frozen berries and hepatitis A

Five people are hospitalised every two days with hepatitis A caused by eating food containing frozen berries. That is the message given by the latest Ministry of Health report on the epidemic that has been developing in Italy for 14 months. The figures are quite clear: 1 463 people were affected between January 2013 and the end of February this year.

The European Food Safety Authority considers this epidemic to be international, as it has also spread to four countries in northern Europe (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland), where 71 cases have been recorded, as well as Ireland and France, with a further 16 cases, all associated with eating berries.

The shocking side to this story is that the vast majority of people are happily continuing to eat berries (blackberries, red currants, blueberries and raspberries) in pies, pastries and ice creams, unaware that they are in danger of falling ill. The problem affects not just home consumption but above all desserts eaten in restaurants, pizzerias and other commercial outlets.

After a year of research and analysis, the task force set up by the Ministry of Health to identify the source of the epidemic has drawn a blank. The experts seem to rule out the idea that a single ingredient may have given rise to the contamination. They think it may have come from a group of producers in a single geographical area, with subsequent contamination in the processing or sorting plants in the distribution chain.

Can the Commission say why companies that make desserts or pies containing frozen berries and distribute them to restaurants, pizzerias and other outlets have not recalled their products?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-003896/2014. ([1])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004591/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Pratica dell'aborto selettivo in India

In diverse zone dell'India la nascita di una bambina è ancora oggi molto spesso considerata come una vera e propria calamità. Per questo, come in passato, anche oggi spesso non è loro concesso di vivere. Vi è, infatti, la convinzione che allevare una bambina sia uno spreco di tempo e di denaro. Le donne non garantiscono la continuazione del nome della famiglia, non contribuiscono al suo sostegno economico.

Alla fine degli anni Novanta, lo squilibrio tra i sessi è lievemente decresciuto come conseguenza di un miglioramento dello status delle donne. Ma la possibilità data, in quegli stessi anni, di conoscere il sesso del feto grazie all'ecografia ha determinato una ricaduta nella piaga dell'aborto.

Numerosi indiani credono che il feto sia privo di anima fino al secondo trimestre di gravidanza e dunque ritengono l'aborto moralmente accettabile. Per questo i test per determinare il sesso del nascituro sono progressivamente diventati un vero e proprio business.

Sui poster appesi nelle stazioni e sui volantini dati negli ospedali predomina la pubblicità di test ed ecografie per donne incinte con prezzi accessibili anche alle classi sociali meno abbienti. Ancora oggi molte donne si rifiutano di fare ecografie nel tentativo di nascondere il sesso del nascituro e dunque evitare che la famiglia decida se sia meritevole o meno di vivere.

Considerato che l'ultimo censimento mostra come l'infanticidio femminile sia ancora una piaga particolarmente diffusa in India, a discapito dell'idea che una bambina possa essere una risorsa importante per un Paese che, paradossalmente, ha già avuto una donna come primo ministro, può la Commissione chiarire quali interventi sono stati intrapresi finora e quali saranno le linee guida future per tutelare i diritti delle donne e dei bambini in India?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

L'UE segue attentamente la situazione dei diritti umani in India e già da tempo coinvolge le autorità italiane e la società civile nel dibattito sulla violenza e la discriminazione nei confronti delle donne e sulle questioni di genere. L'approccio dell'UE si basa su tre principi: la promozione dell'uguaglianza di genere e dell'emancipazione femminile; la lotta alle discriminazioni di genere e la violenza contro le donne e le bambine; la protezione e la promozione dei diritti dei minori, in particolare delle bambine. Questi sono temi centrali, fra l'altro, delle riunioni del regolare dialogo UE-India sui diritti umani, che costituisce la piattaforma più appropriata per discutere la questione con il paese. L'ultima di queste riunioni ha avuto luogo il 27 novembre 2013.

Le questioni legate alle donne sono parte integrante anche delle attività di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE: il benessere delle donne e delle bambine è al centro dei programmi in materia di istruzione e di sanità, mentre numerosi progetti hanno aiutato le organizzazioni della società civile ad affrontare questioni come la violenza contro le donne, compresi la tratta di minori, i matrimoni infantili, la violenza domestica e l'HIV/AIDS. Un progetto in atto ha in particolare l'obiettivo di conferire maggiore responsabilità alle donne che occupano posti di rilievo in organismi di governance locali affinché promuovano i diritti delle donne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004591/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Selective abortion in India

To this day, the birth of a girl is very often regarded as a veritable calamity in many parts of India. As in the past, therefore, it still often happens that baby girls are not allowed to live. People really believe that bringing up a girl is a waste of time and money. Women do not carry on the name of the family and do not contribute economically to its support.

The gender imbalance in India fell slightly in the late 1990s because of an improvement in the status of women. At around the same time, however, ultrasound made it possible to find out the sex of a foetus, leading to a reliance on the scourge of abortion.

Many Indians believe that the foetus has no soul until the second trimester of pregnancy and so they see abortion as morally acceptable. As a result, tests to find out the sex of an unborn child have become big business.

Posters in stations and leaflets handed out in hospitals advertise tests and ultrasound scans for pregnant women at prices that even the less well-off classes in society can afford. Many women still refuse to have ultrasounds in an attempt to hide the unborn child's sex and thus prevent the family from deciding whether it deserves to live or not.

The latest census shows that female infanticide is still a particularly widespread evil in India, contrary to the idea that a girl child can be an important resource for a country, which, paradoxically, once had a woman as prime minister. In that respect, can the Commission say what action has been taken to date and what the future guidelines will be as regards protecting women's and children's rights in India?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The EU pays great attention to the situation of human rights in India and has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence, discrimination against women and gender issues. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, combating gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls. These topics feature prominently, *inter alia*, in the meetings of the regular EU-India Human Rights Dialogue, which provides the most relevant platform to discuss this issue with India. The latest such meeting took place on 27 November 2013.

Women's issues are also mainstreamed into EU development cooperation activities: education and health-related programmes have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare, while numerous projects have helped civil society organisations to address issues such as violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. An ongoing project aims at empowering women leaders from local governance institutions to promote women's rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004592/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Conseguenze sui lavoratori e le micro-imprese della liberalizzazione delle giornate di apertura delle attività commerciali in Italia

In Italia, con una serie di provvedimenti giustificati anche dai vincoli di bilancio imposti dall'Unione europea, il Governo allora presieduto da Mario Monti ha liberalizzato le giornate di apertura delle attività commerciali. Lo scopo dell'iniziativa, rivelatosi poi miseramente fallito, era quello di provare in ogni modo ad aumentare il tasso di crescita del prodotto interno lordo della Repubblica Italiana.

L'apertura indiscriminata dei negozi ha, però, causato anche diversi problemi soprattutto nelle grandi superfici commerciali dove, regolata da contratti «b2b» (business to business), vi è la presenza di numerose piccole attività a gestione familiare.

Quasi tutte le grandi strutture commerciali hanno approfittato dell'apertura senza giornata di riposo ed hanno imposto alle micro-imprese commerciali presenti nei loro ambiti (impossibilitate ad assumere personale a causa dei limitati fatturati) clausole vessatorie molto pesanti che scattano qualora i titolari decidano di chiudere l'attività anche solo per un giorno. Queste clausole sono state attivate anche nei rapporti contrattuali sorti prima dell'entrata in vigore dei provvedimenti che hanno progressivamente eliminato le domeniche di riposo obbligatorie.

Dal momento che la Corte di Cassazione Italiana ha più volte sancito il diritto al riposo dei lavoratori (anche con la sentenza numero 9009 del 2001) e dal momento che diverse norme dell'Unione europea intendono promuovere e tutelare la piccola e piccolissima attività imprenditoriale, non ritiene la Commissione che se non si disponesse per analogia il diritto al riposo anche per i titolari di micro-imprese, si lederebbe un loro diritto fondamentale?

Le clausole contrattuali con cui grandi aziende, spesso multinazionali della grande distribuzione, impongono ai piccoli negozi presenti nei loro centri commerciali l'apertura sette giorni alla settimana è compatibile con i principi e le norme stabiliti dall'Unione europea e dalle convenzioni internazionali sui diritti dei lavoratori?

Non ritiene la Commissione che, con l'apertura indiscriminata delle attività commerciali, senza clausole di salvaguardia per le micro-imprese, provvedimenti come quello preso dal Governo Italiano rischino di compromettere i risultati dell'attività delle Istituzioni europee a sostegno della piccola imprenditoria?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

L'articolo 31, paragrafo 2, della Carta dei diritti fondamentali stabilisce che ogni lavoratore ha diritto a una limitazione della durata massima del lavoro e a periodi di riposo giornalieri e settimanali, mentre la direttiva sull'orario di lavoro ([1]) stabilisce norme minime specifiche per la protezione della salute e della sicurezza dei lavoratori nell'UE per quanto concerne certi aspetti dell'orario di lavoro. In particolare, essa stabilisce periodi di riposo minimi giornalieri (11 ore consecutive) e settimanali (24 ore di riposo ininterrotto, oltre alle 11 ore di riposo giornaliero, per periodo di sette giorni). Gli Stati membri hanno facoltà di stabilire un livello più elevato di protezione e di introdurre in certi casi deroghe a questi requisiti minimi.

La direttiva non specifica il giorno in cui il periodo minimo di riposo settimanale deve essere garantito, poiché si tratta di una questione che compete agli Stati membri. Il diritto a periodi di riposo settimanali in forza della direttiva si applica soltanto ai lavoratori subordinati e non ai lavoratori autonomi come, ad esempio, i proprietari di aziende. Analogamente, l'articolo 31, paragrafo 2, della Carta fa riferimento soltanto ai lavoratori subordinati. La situazione descritta dall'Onorevole deputato non risulta pertanto violare i diritti fondamentali dei proprietari di microimprese.

Per gli stessi motivi, le clausole contrattuali menzionate non sollevano la questione della compatibilità con la legislazione unionale o internazionale sui diritti dei lavoratori.

([1]) Direttiva 2003/88/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 4 novembre 2003, concernente taluni aspetti dell'organizzazione dell'orario di lavoro, GU L 299 del 18.11.2003, pag. 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004592/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Consequences for workers and micro-enterprises of the deregulation of opening days of retail businesses in Italy

In Italy, in a series of measures justified among other things by the budget restrictions imposed by the European Union, the government then presided by Mario Monti deregulated the opening days of retail businesses. The purpose of this initiative, which subsequently turned out to be a miserable failure, was to seek by any means to increase the rate of growth of the gross domestic product of the Italian Republic.

The indiscriminate opening of shops, however, has also caused a number of problems, particularly to superstores governed by 'b2b' (business to business) contracts, in which many small, family-run businesses operate.

Almost all large retail businesses have taken the opportunity for seven-day trading and have imposed on the micro-enterprises which operate on their premises (which are prevented from taking on staff due to their limited turnover) very onerous and unfair clauses which come into effect when owners decide to close their business even for a day. These clauses have also been activated in contractual relationships which began prior to the implementation of the measures which have progressively done away with Sunday as a compulsory day of rest.

Since the Italian Court of Cassation has repeatedly established the employees' right to a rest day (including in judgment No 9009 of 2001) and since various European Union laws seek to encourage and protect small and very small businesses, does the Commission consider that if, by analogy, there were no right to a rest day for the owners of micro-enterprises, this would breach one of their fundamental rights?

Are the contractual clauses used by large companies, often multinational large-scale retailers, to force small businesses which operate in their shopping centres to open seven days a week compatible with the principles and laws laid down by the European Union and by international agreements on workers' rights?

Does the Commission consider that with the indiscriminate opening of retail businesses, with no protection clauses for micro-enterprises, measures such as the one taken by the Italian Government threaten to compromise the results of the activity of the European institutions in support of small business?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

Article 31(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights provides that every worker has a right to a limitation of working hours and to daily and weekly rest periods, while the Working Time Directive ([1]) sets specific minimum standards for the protection of workers' health and safety across the EU as regards certain aspects of working time. In particular, it lays down minimum daily (11 consecutive hours) and weekly rest periods (24 hours of uninterrupted rest, in addition to the 11 hours' daily rest, per seven-day period). The Member States may always provide for a higher level of protection and for derogations from those minimum requirements in certain cases.

The directive does not specify the day on which the minimum weekly rest has to be provided, which is a matter for the Member States. The right to weekly rest periods under the directive applies only to workers and not to self-employed persons, such as business-owners. Similarly, Article 31(2) of the Charter refers only to workers. The situation described by the Honourable Member therefore does not appear to breach the fundamental rights of owners of micro-enterprises.

For the same reasons, the contract clauses referred to raise no question of compatibility with EU or international law on workers' rights.

([1]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4.11.2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004593/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Donna muore dopo aborto farmacologico

L'aborto, già di per sé eticamente discutibile, non solo causa la morte di embrioni, ma registra un aumento di casi di madri morte in seguito alla pratica dell'aborto farmacologico. L'ultimo caso è quello di una donna di trentasette anni che è morta a Torino, subito dopo un'interruzione volontaria di gravidanza tramite pillola abortiva. Due giorni dopo l'assunzione la donna si è ripresentata in ospedale per la somministrazione del farmaco necessario a indurre le contrazioni uterine per l'eliminazione della mucosa e dell'embrione. Nonostante i test effettuati prima di entrambe le somministrazioni, dopo circa quattro ore dall'aborto, la donna ha avvertito una sensazione di soffocamento e, dopo un ecocardiogramma, le è stata diagnosticata una fibrillazione ventricolare. La paziente ha perso conoscenza, secondo i medici a causa di un embolo prodotto dalla fibrillazione, e solo l'intervento immediato con un defibrillatore l'ha tenuta in vita. Condotta poi in rianimazione, la donna è stata colpita da un nuovo e più forte attacco che ne ha causato la morte, nonostante venticinque minuti di tentativi di rianimazione. La direzione dell'ospedale ha deciso di procedere all'autopsia ma, stando alla cartella clinica, la paziente non soffriva di particolari patologie e non era quindi a rischio rispetto al metodo utilizzato per interrompere la gravidanza. Nemmeno il ginecologo della donna ha dato parere negativo sull'aborto farmacologico.

Anche all'estero sono stati segnalati casi simili, in particolare negli Stati Uniti, dove almeno otto donne sono morte in seguito ad aborto farmacologico.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione chiarire se siano stati registrati casi analoghi anche in altri Stati membri o in altri paesi extra-europei? Esistono altri dati che mettono in collegamento la pratica dell'aborto e la successiva morte della paziente?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

Nel maggio 2013 il progetto EURO-PERISTAT ([1]) ha presentato una seconda relazione sulla salute perinatale in Europea intitolata «Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010» ([2]) (Salute e assistenza delle donne incinte e dei bambini in Europa nel 2010).

Il progetto raccomanda due indicatori di mortalità materna: il tasso di mortalità materna e la mortalità materna ripartita per causa di decesso. Per quest'ultimo indicatore EURO-PERISTAT ha raccolto dati relativi al periodo 2006-2010 sui tassi di mortalità materna dovuta a cause ostetriche a livello europeo a partire dai dati nazionali disponibili.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004593/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Woman dies after medical abortion

Abortion, itself ethically debatable, not only causes the death of embryos but is also recording an increase in the number of mothers dying after a medical abortion has been carried out. The most recent case relates to a thirty-seven year old woman from Turin, who died following a voluntary termination of her pregnancy with an abortion pill. Two days after receiving the treatment the woman returned to hospital for the administration of the drug necessary to induce uterine contractions in order to expel the lining of the womb and the embryo. Despite tests carried out prior to both procedures, around four hours after the abortion the woman experienced a feeling of suffocation, and after an echocardiogram was diagnosed with ventricular fibrillation. The patient lost consciousness, according to doctors due to an embolism caused by the fibrillation, and was kept alive only by the immediate use of a defibrillator. On being taken to intensive care, the woman suffered another, more severe attack which led to her death, despite efforts made to resuscitate her for twenty-five minutes. The hospital management decided to carry out a post-mortem, but, according to her medical record, the patient was not suffering from disease of any kind and was not therefore at risk in relation to the method used to terminate her pregnancy. The woman's gynaecologist also did not advise against a medical abortion.

Similar cases have also been recorded abroad, in particular in the United States, where at least eight women have died following a medical abortion.

In light of the above, can the Commission clarify whether any similar cases have been recorded in other Member States or in any non-European countries? Does any other data exist linking the carrying out of abortions with the subsequent death of the patient?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

In May 2013, the EU-funded Euro-Peristat ([1]) project released a second European Perinatal Health Report entitled 'Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010' ([2]).

The project recommends two indicators on maternal mortality: maternal mortality ratio and maternal mortality by cause of death. For the latter, Euro-Peristat has collected data for the period 2006-2010 on maternal mortality ratios by obstetric causes European level from available national data.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301
([2]) http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004595/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Sospensione dei trasferimenti degli introiti fiscali che Israele raccoglie per conto dell'Anp

Israele ha deciso di imporre delle sanzioni contro l'Autorità nazionale palestinese, che comporteranno la sospensione dei trasferimenti degli introiti fiscali che il governo di Tel Aviv raccoglie per conto dell'Anp. Si tratta di un ammontare di circa 100 milioni di dollari mensili, pari a circa due terzi del budget totale dell'Anp. Secondo il governo, le trattenute verranno invece utilizzate per coprire i debiti palestinesi nei confronti delle imprese di servizi israeliane. Secondo una fonte interno al governo, la decisione è stata presa come ritorsione contro la decisione dell'Anp di fare domanda di adesione per tredici diverse agenzie delle Nazioni Unite.

Il Vice-presidente/Alto Rappresentante intende esprimersi sulla questione?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

Gli introiti fiscali riscossi da Israele per conto dell'AP appartengono all'Autorità palestinese, che ne ha assoluto bisogno per poter svolgere le sue funzioni. Oltre a compromettere la capacità dell'Autorità palestinese di erogare servizi essenziali alla popolazione, la sospensione dei trasferimenti danneggia anche gli interessi di Israele in termini di sicurezza.

L'UE ha chiesto in diverse occasioni, ivi compreso nelle conclusioni del Consiglio del 14 maggio 2012, il trasferimento regolare e prevedibile degli introiti doganali e fiscali palestinesi, che costituisce un obbligo per Israele a norma del protocollo di Parigi.

A quanto risulta all'UE, finora i trasferimenti mensili non sono stati congelati, anche se sono state operate più deduzioni del solito per coprire i debiti dell'Autorità palestinese nei confronti delle imprese israeliane di servizi pubblici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004595/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Suspension of transfers of tax revenues collected by Israel on behalf of the PNA

Israel has taken the decision to impose sanctions on the Palestinian National Authority, involving the suspension of transfers of tax revenues which the government in Tel Aviv collects on behalf of the PNA. This is an amount of some 100 million dollars per month, equivalent to around two thirds of the PNA's total budget. According to the government, the amounts withheld will instead be used to pay off Palestinian debts to the Israeli utility companies. According to a government source, the decision has been taken in reprisal for the PNA's decision to apply for membership of thirteen different agencies of the United Nations.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to express a view on the matter?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The tax revenues collected by Israel on behalf of the PNA belong to the Palestinian Authority and are essential to enable it to function. The suspension of the transfer hampers the ability of the Palestinian Authority to provide essential services to the Palestinian population and is harmful to Israel's security interests as well.

On various occasions including in the Council Conclusions of 14 May 2012, the EU has called for the regular and predictable transfer of Palestinian customs and tax revenues underlining that these transfers by Israel are an obligation under the Paris Protocol.

The EU understands that the monthly transfers have so far not been frozen though further deductions than usual have been made to pay off PA debts to Israeli utilities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004596/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ecopatente

Quest'anno si tiene a Roma la quinta edizione del corso gratuito «Ecopatente», destinato a istruttori, patentandi e patentati, per fornire indicazioni sulle regole base per una guida sostenibile e per diventare automobilisti consapevoli. Dall'uso di carburanti come gas, gpl e metano all'utilizzo di tecnologie come lo «start and stop», il corso spiega metodi e strumenti per ridurre l'impatto della propria guida sull'ambiente circostante. In Italia sono oltre 5 000 gli eco patentati e oltre 2 000 i formatori delle scuole che hanno prestato la loro opera alla manifestazione.

In merito a questo progetto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. Ne è a conoscenza?

2. Dispone di informazioni riguardo a iniziative simili condotte in altri Stati membri?

3. Ritiene che questo genere di iniziativa possa godere di fondi europei per divenire un progetto transeuropeo di educazione alla cittadinanza?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2014)

La Commissione riconosce l'importanza del cosiddetto stile di guida ecologico che permette di ridurre il consumo di carburante e le emissioni e che, in generale, garantisce una maggiore sicurezza di guida. Per questo motivo elementi dello stile di guida ecologico sono stati inseriti nei requisiti minimi degli esami per conseguire la patente di guida per autobus e autocarri (i veicoli di categoria C e D) di cui alla direttiva 2012/36/UE, recante modifica della direttiva 2006/12/CE concernente la patente di guida ([1]).

Inoltre nell'ambito del progetto ECOWILL (Ecodriving-Widespread Implementation for Learner drivers and Licensed Drivers), cofinanziato dalla Commissione, sono state adottate iniziative per rafforzare ulteriormente le attività di guida ecologica sia per i titolari di patente di guida sia per i futuri conducenti. La descrizione del progetto italiano «Ecopatente», come pure informazioni sulle attività in questo ambito in altri Stati membri, sono reperibili sul sito web del progetto www.ecodrive.org, che si è svolto tra il 2010 e il 2013.

([1]) GU L 321 del 20.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004596/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Ecopatente

The fifth 'Ecopatente' course will be held this year in Rome; intended for instructors, learners and qualified drivers, this free course aims to provide them with information on the basic rules of sustainable driving and enable them to become aware drivers. From the use of fuels such as gas, LPG and methane to the use of technologies such as 'start and stop', the course explains methods and tools for reducing the impact of an individual's driving on the surrounding environment. In Italy more than 5 000 drivers have obtained the Ecopatente and over 2 000 training school instructors have contributed to the event.

1. Can the Commission clarify whether it is aware of this project?

2. Does it have any information relating to similar initiatives carried out in other Member States?

3. Does it consider that an initiative of this kind could benefit from European funding to become a Europe-wide citizenship education programme?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The Commission recognises the importance of driving in a way that reduces fuel consumption and emissions, the so called eco-driving, which generally also contributes to safer driving. For this reason the elements of eco-driving were included in the minimum requirements for driving licence testing for bus and lorries (the vehicles of category C and D) by Directive 2012/36/EU amending Directive 2006/126/EC on driving licences ([1]).

Furthermore under the Ecowill-project (Ecodriving-Widespread Implementation for Learner drivers and Licensed Drivers), co-funded by the Commission, steps are taken to further strengthen eco-driving activities both for licenced and learner drivers. Both description of the Italian project 'Ecopatente', as well as information on activities in other Member States, can be found in the deliverables from that project, available on the website of project, www.ecodrive.org. The project ran from 2010 to 2013.

([1]) OJ L 321, 20.11.2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004597/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Cibo stampato in 3D

Un'azienda tedesca ha fatto una proposta innovativa per chi soffre di disfagia, cioè una difficoltà nel deglutire dovuta a un malfunzionamento della laringe che può addirittura portare il cibo a finire nei polmoni. L'azienda ha infatti messo a punto delle stampanti in grado di riprodurre alimenti nella loro forma originale, ma più facili da masticare e ingerire. La disfagia è una disfunzione che può anche avere gravi conseguenze, come polmoniti e insufficienza renale, talvolta fatali.

Per far fronte a questo problema, speciali stampanti 3D saranno dotate di «cartucce», riempite con il cibo cotto e liquefatto, cui sarà aggiunta una sostanza gelificante. Le cartucce saranno tra l'altro divise tra cibi vegetali e animali. In questo modo si potrà riprodurre il cibo in tre dimensioni, mantenendo però una consistenza più morbida e più facile da ingoiare. Inoltre, sarà possibile aggiungere altri nutrienti specifici.

In merito a quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza del progetto?

2. Ritiene che il processo di stampa 3D del cibo possa alterare il cibo e renderlo dannoso per la salute umana?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del progetto citato dall'onorevole deputato.

Riguardo alla sicurezza alimentare, il regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([1]) stabilisce i principi e i requisiti generali della legislazione alimentare e stabilisce che tutti gli alimenti immessi sul mercato UE siano sicuri indipendentemente dal modo con cui sono prodotti. Compete alle autorità nazionali garantirne la conformità alla legislazione della UE.

([1]) GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004597/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Food printed in 3D

A German company has come up with an innovative proposal for dysphagia sufferers. The condition makes it difficult to swallow, due to a malfunctioning larynx which can even divert food into the lungs. Now the company has designed printers which can reproduce foods in their original form, but make them easier to chew and swallow. Dysphagia can have serious and sometimes fatal consequences, such as pneumonia and kidney failure.

The special 3D printers will hold 'cartridges' filled with cooked, liquefied food plus a gelation agent. There will be different cartridges for meat and vegetables. This way it will be possible to reproduce the food in three dimensions, while keeping it softer and easier to swallow. It will also be possible to add specific nutrients.

1. Is the Commission aware of this project?

2. Does it think 3D printing may alter the food and make it harmful to human health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission is not aware of the project mentioned by the Honourable Member.

With respect to food safety Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) lays down the general principles and requirements of food law and requires all food placed on the market in the EU to be safe regardless of the way of manufacturing. It is the responsibility of national competent authorities to ensure compliance with EU legislation.

([1]) OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p. 1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004598/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Consumo di alcolici, droghe e social network

Una ricerca dell'università del Nuovo Galles del Sud, in Australia, ha studiato le abitudini dei giovani australiani nel tempo libero e come queste sono mutate a causa della penetrazione della «tecnologia connessa» nella loro vita quotidiana. Secondo i ricercatori, mentre in passato i giovani australiani prediligevano pub, locali e feste, la diffusione di Internet e dei social network li spinge a restare più tempo in casa, davanti al computer. La conseguenza principale di questo mutamento nello stile di vita è una riduzione piuttosto marcata nel consumo di alcol: la percentuale degli adolescenti (di età compresa tra i 14 e i 17 anni) bevitori si è infatti abbassata, secondo quanto affermato da una ricerca dell'università del Nuovo Galles del Sud, dal 50 al 30 % a partire dal 2001. Inoltre, sempre secondo il medesimo studio, si è ridotto anche il consumo di droghe nella stessa fascia di età.

In merito ai risultati di questo studio, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. sono reperibili dati analoghi in relazione agli adolescenti europei?

2. Pur considerando che la riduzione del consumo di alcol in età adolescenziale è un trend positivo e da incoraggiare, ha motivo di ritenere che l'utilizzo eccessivo di social network possa sviluppare una sorta di dipendenza negli adolescenti? È a conoscenza di studi che possano avvalorare questa ipotesi?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

Nell'ambito del progetto europeo di indagini scolastiche sull'alcol e altre droghe (ESPAD), ogni quattro anni vengono pubblicati i dati sull'uso di sostanze tra i giovani di 15-16 anni. La relazione del 2011 evidenzia un leggero calo nel consumo di alcolici, nell'arco della vita e nei 12 mesi precedenti la compilazione del questionario, sebbene in alcuni paesi si sia registrato un aumento. Per quanto riguarda il potenziale impatto dell'uso di internet sul consumo di droghe e alcolici da parte dei minori, la Commissione non è a conoscenza di studi simili effettuati in Europa.

Dal momento che internet è diventata parte integrante della vita di bambini e ragazzi, il tempo che questi trascorrono online inizia a sollevare alcuni interrogativi sulla loro capacità di autogestire l'uso della Rete.

Al fine di valutare in quale misura bambini e ragazzi fanno un uso eccessivo di internet, la Commissione ha finanziato uno studio approfondito, condotto nel 2012, sull'uso di internet da parte dei minori europei ([1]). Sono stati intervistati 13 284 adolescenti, di età compresa tra i 14 e i 17 anni, provenienti da 7 paesi europei. L'1,2 % degli intervistati mostra segni di dipendenza da internet ([2]). Dallo studio EU Kids Online ([3]), anch'esso finanziato dalla Commissione, è emerso che, sebbene il 29 % dei bambini abbia presentato almeno uno dei cinque indicatori ([4]) associati a un uso eccessivo di internet, soltanto l'1 % fa un uso della Rete che può essere ritenuto patologico. I risultati suggeriscono che i più vulnerabili all'uso eccessivo di internet e alle sue conseguenze negative sono i ragazzi più grandi, quelli che hanno difficoltà emotive e quelli che sono alla ricerca di sensazioni forti.

Le conclusioni di entrambi gli studi indicano che trascorrere tanto tempo online non sempre è segno di un uso problematico di internet ([5]). Gli studi raccomandano ai genitori di partecipare attivamente alle attività online dei loro figli attraverso il dialogo e il supporto.

([1]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/
([2]) La dipendenza da internet è definita come un modello comportamentale caratterizzato dalla perdita di controllo in relazione all'uso di internet. Tale dipendenza può portare ad isolarsi e a trascurare lo studio, le attività sociali e ricreative, l'igiene personale e la salute.
([3]) http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/47344/
([4]) Salienza, ripiegamento su se stessi, tolleranza, conflitto, ricaduta.
([5]) I ragazzi europei di età compresa tra i 9 e i 16 anni utilizzano internet principalmente per i compiti (85 %).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004598/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Drug and alcohol consumption and social networks

Research at Australia's University of New South Wales (UNSW) has studied young Australians' leisure habits and how they have changed through the spread of 'connected technology' in their daily lives. According to the researchers, young Australians used to frequent pubs, clubs and parties, whereas the spread of the Internet and social networks now induces them to spend more time in front of a computer at home. The main consequence of this lifestyle change has been quite a sharp drop in the percentage of adolescents (aged 14 to 17) who consume alcohol, from 50% to 30% since 2001, according to the UNSW research. The study adds that drug use has also fallen among the same age group.

1. Can the Commission indicate whether similar data is available on European adolescents?

2. Falling alcohol consumption during adolescence is a positive trend to encourage, but is there any reason to believe that excessive use of social networking can develop a kind of dependency among adolescents? Is the Commission aware of studies which bear out this theory?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The European School Survey on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) compiles data every fourth year on substance use among 15-16-year-olds. The 2011 report shows a slight decrease in lifetime alcohol use and use in past 12 months, however, some countries see an increase. As the potential impact Internet use might have on drug and alcohol assumption of minors, the Commission is not aware of a similar study undertaken in Europe.

As Internet has become an integral part of children and young people's lives, the time spent online is prompting questions about whether they are in control of their Internet usage.

In order to be able to assess to what extent children and young people use the Internet excessively, the Commission funded an extensive study on the Internet use of minors in Europe ([1]). The study from 2012 surveyed 13 284 adolescents, aged 14-17, from 7 European countries. Of all those surveyed, 1.2% showed signs of Internet Addictive Behaviour ([2]). The EU Kids Online study ([3]), also funded by the Commission, showed that while 29% of children experienced one or more of the five components ([4]) associated with excessive Internet use, only 1% can be said to show pathological levels of use. The results suggest that those children who are most vulnerable to excessive Internet use and its negative consequences are those who are older, have emotional problems and exhibit high levels of sensation-seeking.

Conclusions from both studies show that spending a lot of time online is not necessarily a sign of a child having problems related to Internet use ([5]). The studies recommend that parents involve themselves actively in their child's online activities through support and discussion.

([1]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/
([2]) IAB is defined as a behavioural pattern characterised by a loss of control over Internet use. IAB can lead potentially to isolation and neglect of social, academic and recreational activities or personal hygiene and health.
([3]) http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/47344/
([4]) Salience, withdrawal, tolerance, conflict, relapse.
([5]) The most common online activity of 9-16 year olds in Europe is using the Internet for school work (85%).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004599/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Terremoto in Nicaragua

Un sisma di magnitudo 6.1 ha scosso nella notte Managua, privando la capitale del Nicaragua della luce e dei collegamenti telefonici. Fino ad ora è stata registrata una sola vittima, mentre sono trentatré i feriti. Le autorità locali parlano di ingenti danni ad edifici e abitazioni. La Commissione è in grado di chiarire se la vittima o i feriti siano cittadini europei? È a conoscenza di richieste del governo nicaraguense di sostegno per la ricostruzione?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

La Commissione non è stata informata di cittadini europei tra le vittime o i feriti a causa del terremoto che ha colpito il Nicaragua il 10 aprile 2014. La Commissione, attraverso la sua Direzione generale per gli aiuti umanitari e la protezione civile (ECHO), ha fornito assistenza umanitaria d'emergenza attraverso la Federazione internazionale della Croce rossa e della Mezzaluna rossa. L'assistenza, attuata dalla società della Croce rossa del Nicaragua, è diretta alle famiglie che vivono in prossimità dell'epicentro e integra le attività messe in atto dalle autorità nazionali e locali.

Inoltre, nella fase di allerta, sono stati utilizzati a pieno ritmo i meccanismi e protocolli sviluppati nell'ambito dei tre precedenti piani d'azione DIPECHO (Disaster Preparedness ECHO), il che ha contribuito ad assicurare un intervento efficace a Managua. I sistemi di comunicazione via radio hanno agevolato l'attivazione immediata e la comunicazione tra i comitati di risposta locali e municipali, nonostante il fatto che le comunicazioni telefoniche fossero interrotte. La disponibilità di piani di risposta e d'intervento adeguati ha permesso un intervento rapido e l'evacuazione preventiva delle famiglie che vivono negli edifici a rischio che erano stati preidentificati. Il sistema nazionale si è servito di prodotti della comunicazione e dell'informazione per sensibilizzare la popolazione sulla preparazione e il comportamento sicuro in caso di terremoto.

Il Nicaragua non ha fatto domanda attraverso il meccanismo di protezione civile dell'Unione. Tale meccanismo, coordinato dalla Commissione, agevola la fornitura di assistenza ai paesi colpiti da una catastrofe grave chiedendo assistenza internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004599/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Earthquake in Nicaragua

Managua was shaken during the night by an earthquake of magnitude 6.1, leaving the capital city of Nicaragua without electricity and telephone lines. So far only one fatality has been recorded, and thirty-three wounded. The local authorities are talking of huge damage to buildings and houses. Can the Commission clarify whether the victim or the wounded are European citizens? Is it aware of any requests from the Nicaraguan government for assistance with reconstruction?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission has not been informed of any European citizens being victim or wounded due to the earthquake that struck Nicaragua on 10 April 2014. The Commission, through its Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), has provided emergency humanitarian assistance through the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The assistance is implemented by the Nicaraguan Red Cross Society; it targets families living close to the epicentre and complements the on-going response by the national and local authorities.

Furthermore, in the alert phase, mechanisms and protocols developed under three previous Dipecho (Disaster Preparedness ECHO) Action Plans were well used, contributing to the effective response in Managua. Radio communication systems facilitated immediate activation of and communication between local and municipal response committees despite the fact that the phone communication system was down. Adapted response plans allowed rapid intervention and preventive evacuation of families living in vulnerable buildings that had been pre-identified. Communication and information products have been used by the national system to sensitize the population on preparedness and safe conduct in case of earthquake.

Nicaragua has made no request through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The mechanism, coordinated by the Commission, facilitates the provision of assistance to countries affected by a major disaster asking for international assistance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004600/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Welfare di distretto per rilanciare l'economia

In questi giorni debutta in Italia il «welfare di distretto», uno strumento adottato in accordo tra sindacati e organizzazioni di rappresentanza degli imprenditori che punta a far recuperare potere d'acquisto ai lavoratori delle PMI, sviluppando allo stesso tempo servizi sul territorio, dall'asilo nido alla diagnostica, dai trasporti alle attività sportive. L'obiettivo di questo strumento è far sì che anche le piccole e medie imprese possano godere di beni e servizi che normalmente solo le grandi imprese possono permettersi; obiettivo che si intende raggiungere considerando tutte le imprese di un'area geografica come una sorta di unica grande impresa in cui i lavoratori potranno scegliere se trasformare in welfare per se tessi e la propria famiglia le varie forme di salario variabile. In tal modo i dipendenti potranno comunque vedersi versati i relativi contributi e al tempo stesso ottenere beni e servizi per un valore generalmente superiore a quello monetario che sarebbe erogato in busta paga. Il sistema del welfare di distretto sarà gestito tramite una piattaforma informatica che offrirà i diversi beni e servizi in convenzione a tutti i dipendenti delle aziende associate al progetto. Questo strumento ha il triplice vantaggio di offrire beni e servizi aggiuntivi ai lavoratori, di ottenere maggiore rendimento a vantaggio dell'impresa e di far crescere l'economia del territorio sul quale lo strumento agisce. La sperimentazione partirà da circa cinquanta industrie tessili nell'area di Prato, per poi estendersi a tutte le altre presenti sul territorio in questione.

In merito a quanto descritto, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza del progetto sperimentale in questione?

2. dispone di dati relativi a strumenti simili avviati in altri Stati membri e ai risultati ottenuti dalle imprese e dai dipendenti?

3. ha mai discusso, in documenti orientativi o incontri formali con rappresentanti di settore, della possibilità di adottare il «welfare di distretto» come strumento guida di rilancio dell'economia? Ritiene che possa essere uno strumento efficace in tal senso?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(16 giugno 2014)

1. Si, la Commissione è a conoscenza del progetto.

2. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni su progetti analoghi in altri Stati membri.

3. La Commissione non è al corrente di più ampie discussioni sul tema. Ne terrà tuttavia conto nel contesto delle sue azioni nel settore dell'innovazione sociale e dell'innovazione nel luogo di lavoro, ad esempio nell'ambito della Rete Europea per l'Innovazione nel Luogo di Lavoro (European Workplace Innovation Network).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004600/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: District welfare for economic revival

The 'District welfare' project has recently been launched in Italy. The scheme, agreed between mayors and business organisations, aims to restore purchasing power to workers in SMEs. At the same time, it will develop local services ranging from pre-schools to medical services, transport to sports, giving SMEs access to goods and services which normally only big companies can afford. The plan is to treat all businesses in a geographical area like one big company, in which workers have the option of converting the different forms of variable salary into welfare for themselves and their families. In this way, employees' taxes are paid and at the same time they can obtain goods and services generally worth more than the money they would find in their pay packets. The district welfare system will be managed via a computer platform. This will offer the goods and services, by collective agreement, to all employees of the companies which have signed up to the project. The benefits are threefold: goods and services for workers; greater income to the company's advantage; and economic growth in the region where the scheme operates. The experiment will begin with around 50 textile manufacturers in the Prato area and will roll out later to all the others in that district.

1. Is the Commission aware of this experimental project?

2. Does it have data on similar schemes launched in other Member States, and the results achieved by the companies and their employees?

3. Has it ever used policy papers or informal meetings with industry representatives to discuss the possibility of adopting 'district welfare' as a means of boosting economic revival? Does it think it can be effective for that purpose?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

1. Yes, the Commission is aware of this project.

2. The Commission does not have information on similar projects in other Member States.

3. The Commission is not aware of wider discussions on this topic. However it will take it into account in the context of its actions in the field of social innovation and workplace innovation, e.g. the European Workplace Innovation Network.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004602/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Măsuri de protecție a cetățenilor UE împotriva ebola

În ultimele săptămâni, în trei țări din Africa de Vest au fost înregistrate numeroase cazuri de ebola. Având în vedere agresivitatea acestui virus care omoară 9 din 10 pacienți infectați, larga răspândire geografică a cazurilor semnalate, precum și numărul de persoane care călătoresc dinspre Africa de Vest către alte continente, inclusiv către Europa, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri au fost luate, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a preveni răspândirea virusului ebola pe teritoriul european? Are Comisia o strategie comună cu statele membre pentru prevenirea și depistarea, inclusiv în aeroporturi, a eventualelor cazuri de persoane infectate cu virusul ebola care ar putea intra pe teritoriul european? Ce măsuri a luat Comisia, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a avertiza cetățenii europeni care doresc să călătorească către Africa de Vest cu privire la pericolul la care aceștia se expun în regiune?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2014)

De la începutul epidemiei de virusul Ebola în Africa de Vest, Comisia se consultă în mod regulat cu statele membre ale UE în cadrul Comitetului pentru securitate sanitară în temeiul Deciziei 1082/2013/UE ([1]) privind amenințările transfrontaliere grave pentru sănătate.

În acest context, Comisia a transmis statelor membre evaluările de risc elaborate de Centrul European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor, inclusiv măsurile sanitare de bază pentru reducerea la minimum a riscului de contractare a virusului Ebola în zonele afectate, prin intermediul sistemului de avertizare și reacție rapidă al UE. ([2])

În ceea ce privește măsurile disponibile în aeroporturi pentru a detecta posibilele cazuri de persoane afectate de virusul Ebola, broșuri informative sunt distribuite călătorilor pentru a-i informa cu privire la simptomele bolii, cu recomandarea de a consulta un doctor în cazul în care apar astfel de simptome în urma unei deplasări anterioare în țările afectate.

În țările care sunt în prezent afectate de virus, în aeroporturi se distribuie „formulare de reperare a pasagerului” pentru a contribui la contactarea călătorilor în caz de nevoie (de exemplu, în cazul în care călătorii au stat în avion aproape de o persoană care, ulterior, a dezvoltat boala). În aeroportul din Conakry, în Guineea, sunt deja în vigoare controale medicale obligatorii pentru toți pasagerii care zboară din acest aeroport, inclusiv completarea unui chestionar medical și detectarea febrei (porți echipate cu un detector echipat cu o cameră termică).

Informații referitoare la riscul de infecție cu virusul Ebola și la modul de a îl evita au fost transmise de către Comisie statelor membre și sunt disponibile în toate limbile oficiale ale UE pe site-ul internet al Comisiei. ([3])

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Ebola-RRA-West-Africa-8April2014.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004602/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Measures to protect EU citizens against Ebola

A large number of Ebola cases have been detected in recent weeks in three West African countries. This is an extremely aggressive virus that kills nine out of every 10 patients infected. Bearing in mind that the recent cases have been spread over a large area and significant numbers of people travel from West Africa to other continents, including Europe, can the Commission say what measures have been taken, in cooperation with the Member States, to prevent the Ebola virus from spreading to European territory? Does the Commission have a joint strategy with the Member States, including measures at airports to prevent and detect possible cases of people infected with the Ebola virus who could enter European territory? What action has the Commission taken in cooperation with the Member States to warn European citizens wishing to travel to West Africa about the danger of being exposed to the Ebola virus in the region?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

Since the beginning of the epidemic of Ebola virus in Western Africa, the Commission consults regularly with the EU Member States within the Health Security Committee under Decision 1082/2013/EU ([1]) on serious cross-border threats to health.

In this context, the Commission has shared with the Member States the risk assessments prepared by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, including the basic health measures to minimise the risk of acquiring Ebola virus in the affected areas ([2]), through the EU Early Warning and Response System.

Concerning measures available at airports to detect possible cases of people affected by the Ebola virus, information leaflets are distributed to travellers to inform them about the symptoms of the disease, with the recommendation to consult a doctor in case of such symptoms arising following previous travelling in the affected countries.

In the countries which are currently affected by the virus, 'passenger locator cards' are distributed at the airports to help contact travellers in case of need (e.g. if travellers sat in the airplane close to a person who later develops the disease). In the airport of Conakry in Guinea, compulsory medical screening of all passengers flying from the airport, including the completion of a medical questionnaire and fever detection (walk-through detector equipped with a thermal camera) are already in place.

Information on risk of infection with Ebola virus and how to avoid it has been shared with the Member States and is available in all the official EU languages on the Commission website ([3]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Ebola-RRA-West-Africa-8April2014.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004603/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Inițiative și activități ale UE privind bolile rare

Uniunea Europeană, alături de alte state și regiuni importante ale lumii, alocă anual sume importante pentru domeniul cercetării, inclusiv în domeniul cercetării medicale. În țările din UE, este considerată rară orice boală care afectează mai puțin de cinci persoane din 10 000. Se estimează că, la ora actuală, în UE, un număr de 5 000 până la 8 000 de boli rare afectează 6-8% din populație (27-36 de milioane de cetățeni). Conform recomandării Consiliului nr. 151/02 din 8 iunie 2009 privind acțiunea în domeniul bolilor rare, statele membre trebuiau să identifice, până la sfârșitul anului 2013, pe teritoriul național, centrele de expertiză corespunzătoare și, acolo unde nu există, să le creeze. De asemenea, Comisia era invitată să prezinte, până la sfârșitul anului 2013, un raport privind implementarea recomandării mai sus menționate pentru a permite adoptarea măsurilor necesare în programele de acțiune pentru perioada 2014-2020.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul acestui raport de implementare și ce măsuri specifice intenționează să adopte pentru perioada 2014-2020?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(3 iunie 2014)

În prezent, Comisia pregătește un raport cu privire la măsurile luate pentru a pune în aplicare Comunicarea Comisiei din 2008 privind bolile rare ([1]), precum și Recomandarea Consiliului din 8 iunie 2009 ([2]). Acest raport va fi prezentat în curând.

Comisia intenționează să continue sprijinul acordat statelor membre în abordarea bolilor rare prin diverse acțiuni în anii următori, inclusiv în ceea ce privește pregătirea planurilor naționale în domeniul bolilor rare. În plus, atât Programul în domeniul sănătății pentru perioada 2014-2020, cât și programul „Orizont 2020” prevăd sprijinirea acțiunilor privind bolile rare.

([1]) Comunicarea Comisiei privind bolile rare: o provocare pentru Europa [COM (2008) 679 final].
([2]) Recomandarea Consiliului din 8 iunie 2009 privind o acțiune în domeniul bolilor rare (2009/C 151/02).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004603/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: EU initiatives and activities on rare diseases

Each year the European Union, along with other leading States and regions of the world, allocates significant amounts of money to research, including medical research. In EU countries, a rare disease is considered to be any disease affecting fewer than five people in 10 000. It is estimated that, currently in the EU, 5 000 to 8 000 rare diseases affect 6-8% of the population (27-36 million citizens). According to Council Recommendation No 151/02 of 8 June 2009 on an action in the field of rare diseases, Member States were supposed to identify on their national territory, by the end of 2013, the relevant centres of expertise and, where they do not exist, to establish them. Also, the Commission was invited to produce, by the end of 2013, an implementation report on the aforementioned recommendation, in order to allow the adoption of the necessary measures under the action programmes for 2014-2020.

I would like to ask the Commission which stage this implementation report is in and what specific measure it intends to adopt for the period 2014-2020.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission is currently preparing a report on action taken to implement the 2008 Commission Communication on Rare Diseases ([1]) and the Council Recommendation of 8 June 2009 ([2]). This report will be presented shortly.

The Commission intends to continue to support Member States in addressing rare diseases through a variety of actions in the years to come, including the preparation of National Rare Diseases Plans. In addition, both the Health Programme 2014-2020 and Horizon 2020 foresee support to action on rare diseases.

([1]) Commission Communication on Rare Diseases: Europe's challenges [COM(2008) 679 final].
([2]) Council Recommendation of 8.6.2009 on an action in the field of rare diseases (2009/C 151/02).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004604/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Acordul de liber schimb între UE și MERCOSUR

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul negocierilor dintre UE și MERCOSUR pentru încheierea unui acord de liber schimb între cele două regiuni și când estimează Comisia că un astfel de acord ar putea fi semnat?

Răspuns dat de dl De Gucht în numele Comisiei
(26 mai 2014)

Următoarea etapă a negocierilor pentru încheierea unui Acord de asociere UE-Mercosur este schimbul de oferte de acces pe piață în ceea ce privește bunurile, serviciile, stabilirea și achizițiile publice, așa cum s-a convenit la Santiago de Chile în ianuarie 2013. Aceasta este o etapă importantă pentru avansarea și încheierea negocierilor. În prezent, UE și Mercosur lucrează la finalizarea ofertelor și și-au confirmat angajamentul de a proceda la un schimb, în măsura în care ofertele sunt suficient de ambițioase.

Acest angajament a fost reafirmat cu ocazia unei reuniuni a negociatorilor-șefi ai UE și ai Mercosur care a avut loc la Bruxelles la 21 martie 2014 și în cadrul căreia părțile au discutat stadiul de finalizare al ofertelor. Părțile s-au angajat totodată să continue activitățile și consultările interne cu obiectivul de a face schimb de oferte în lunile următoare. Stabilirea datei la care va avea loc schimbul de oferte va depinde de progresele înregistrate în ceea ce privește finalizarea ofertelor respective.

După efectuarea schimbului de oferte, UE și Mercosur vor relua rundele de negocieri în vederea încheierii unui acord cât mai curând posibil. În cursul celor nouă runde de negocieri care s-au desfășurat de la reluarea negocierilor în 2010, s-au realizat progrese importante în ceea ce privește regulile și disciplinele, însă sunt necesare eforturi suplimentare. Prin urmare, nu poate fi stabilită o dată exactă la care se vor încheia negocierile privind Acordul de asociere UE-Mercosur.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004604/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Mercosur free trade agreement

Can the Commission indicate what progress has been made by negotiations between the EU and Mercosur for the conclusion of a free trade agreement and when the agreement is likely to be signed?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The next step in negotiations for an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement is the exchange of market access offers on goods, services and establishment and government procurement, as agreed in Santiago de Chile in January 2013. This is an important step to move these negotiations forward towards their conclusion. Both the EU and Mercosur are currently finalising their respective offers and have confirmed their commitment to proceed to an exchange provided the offers are sufficiently ambitious.

This commitment was restated at a meeting of EU and Mercosur chief negotiators in Brussels on 21 March 2014, where both sides discussed the state of play of the finalisation of their respective offers. They also undertook to continue internal work and consultations with the objective to exchange offers in the coming months. The determination of the date for an exchange of offers will depend on progress in relation to the respective finalisation of offers.

Once offers are exchanged, the EU and Mercosur will resume negotiating rounds with the objective to conclude an agreement as early as possible. Substantial progress on rules and disciplines was already made during the nine negotiating rounds held since the resumption of negotiations in 2010, but further work is needed. It is therefore not possible to determine a date for the conclusion of the negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004605/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Programul Erasmus pentru regiunea Marii Negre

Comisia a adoptat până în prezent două strategii macroregionale: Strategia UE pentru regiunea Mării Baltice și Strategia UE pentru regiunea Dunării. Parlamentul European a solicitat, în repetate rânduri, elaborarea unei strategii a UE pentru regiunea Mării Negre. Criza din peninsula Crimeea a arătat că este necesară o strategie a UE pentru regiunea Mării Negre și o politică energetică a UE care să permită diversificarea surselor și a rutelor de aprovizionare cu energie. Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă și când intenționează să adopte o strategie a UE pentru Regiunea Mării Negre? În acest context, aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă intenționează să propună și un program Erasmus pentru regiunea Mării Negre?

Răspuns dat de Înaltul Reprezentant/doamna vicepreședinte Ashton în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2014)

Uniunea Europeană și-a concentrat activitățile în zona Mării Negre pe consolidarea cooperării sectoriale în domeniul protecției mediului. Între 2007 și 2013, UE a pus în aplicare programul său transfrontalier pentru bazinul Mării Negre din cadrul Instrumentului european de vecinătate și parteneriat, cu fonduri de circa 25,7 milioane EUR.

Deși este hotărâtă să pregătească, la momentul potrivit, o strategie a UE pentru regiunea Mării Negre, astfel cum a solicitat Parlamentul European, UE trebuie să se asigure că o astfel de strategie va fi bine primită atât în interiorul UE, cât și în rândul statelor din bazinul Mării Negre care nu fac parte din UE. Prin urmare, strategia trebuie propusă după ce terenul va fi bine pregătit. În vederea proiectării unei viitoare strategii pentru Marea Neagră, Comisia și-a intensificat eforturile de revitalizare a Sinergiei Mării Negre, colaborând strâns cu organizațiile regionale din bazinul Mării Negre.

Erasmus+ este noul program al UE (2014-2020) pentru proiecte, parteneriate, mobilitate și dialog în materie de educație, formare, tineret și sport. Programul va finanța mobilitatea internațională a studenților și a personalului, consolidarea capacităților universităților din țările partenere și programe comune de masterat cu un sistem de burse de studiu pentru studenții cu rezultate deosebite. Toate țările din regiunea Mării Negre sunt eligibile să participe la programul Erasmus+, fie ca țări membre ale programului (țările membre ale UE și alte țări europene care au semnat un acord special, cum ar fi Turcia), fie ca țări partenere. Următoarea cerere de propuneri din cadrul Erasmus+ este planificată pentru luna septembrie 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004605/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Erasmus programme for the Black Sea region

Up to now, the Commission has adopted two macro-regional strategies: the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea region and the EU strategy for the Danube region. Parliament has repeatedly called for an EU strategy to be drawn up for the Black Sea region. The crisis in the Crimean peninsula has demonstrated the need for an EU strategy for the Black Sea region and an EU energy policy that will allow the diversification of energy sources and supply routes. Can the Commission say whether and when it intends to adopt an EU strategy for the Black Sea region? Will the Commission also propose an Erasmus programme for the Black Sea region?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The European Union has focused its activities in the Black Sea area on enhancing environment protection sector cooperation. Between 2007 and 2013, the EU has implemented its Black Sea basin cross-border programme, under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, for cca EUR 25.7 million.

While the EU remains committed to preparing, at an appropriate time, an EU Strategy for the Black Sea region as called for by the European Parliament, it has to make sure that such a Strategy will be well received both within the EU and among the non-EU Black Sea states. It must therefore come when the ground has been well prepared. For designing a future Strategy for the Black Sea, the Commission intensified its efforts towards revitalizing the Black Sea Synergy, working closely with the Black Sea regional organisations.

Erasmus+ is the EU's new programme (2014-2020) for projects, partnerships, mobility and dialogue in education, training youth and sport. The programme will fund international student and staff mobility, capacity building for universities in partner countries and joint Master degrees with a scholarship scheme for excellent students. All the countries of the Black Sea region are eligible to Erasmus+ either as programme countries (EU countries and other European countries having signed a special agreement such as Turkey) or as partner countries. The next Erasmus+ call for proposals is planned for September 2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004606/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Programul Erasmus pentru regiunea Mării Mediterane

Comisia a adoptat până în prezent doua strategii macroregionale: Strategia UE pentru regiunea Mării Baltice și Strategia UE pentru regiunea Dunării. Parlamentul European a solicitat, în repetate rânduri, elaborarea unei strategii a UE pentru regiunea Mării Mediterane. Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă și când intenționează să adopte o strategie a UE pentru regiunea Mării Mediterane? În acest context, aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă intenționează să propună și un program Erasmus pentru regiunea Mării Mediterane?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(13 iunie 2014)

Comisia nu a propus un „program Erasmus pentru țările mediteraneene". Noul program Erasmus + include o puternică dimensiune internațională prin care vor fi deschise numeroase oportunități de acces la învățământ superior pentru persoane și instituții din țările din sudul Mediteranei.

Mai precis, programul Erasmus este deschis, de asemenea, instituțiilor de învățământ superior, studenților și personalului din țările partenere din afara UE. Acesta finanțează mobilitatea studenților și a personalului la toate nivelurile învățământului superior. Diplomele de masterat în cotutelă sunt oferite de consorții de universități din UE și din țările terțe; Comisia oferă burse de nivel înalt studenților cu rezultate excelente și personalului din întreaga lume pentru a participa la programele de masterat în cotutelă. În cele din urmă, Comisia finanțează acțiuni de consolidare a capacităților în țările din sudul Mediteranei, și anume proiecte comune pentru a finanța dezvoltarea și modernizarea programelor școlare, noi diplome, practici moderne de predare și învățare, modernizarea instalațiilor și echipamentelor, îmbunătățirea guvernanței universitare și crearea de legături mai bune între instituțiile de învățământ superior și lumea locurilor de muncă.

Consiliul European a solicitat Comisiei să faciliteze dezvoltarea a două alte strategii macroregionale: Strategia adriatico-ionică (2014) și Strategia pentru Alpi (2015). Procesul de implementare a unor astfel de strategii este în curs de dezvoltare: statele membre și regiunile acestora trebuie să creeze condițiile necesare și să stabilească o colaborare mai strânsă în cadrul unei strategii macroregionale sau la nivelul bazinului maritim. Până în prezent Consiliul nu a solicitat Comisiei să faciliteze dezvoltarea unei strategii pentru regiunea mediteraneeană.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004606/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Erasmus programme for the Mediterranean region

Up to now, the Commission has adopted two macro-regional strategies: the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea region and the EU strategy for the Danube region. Parliament has repeatedly called for an EU strategy to be drawn up for the Mediterranean region. Can the Commission say whether and when it intends to adopt an EU strategy for the Mediterranean region? Will the Commission also propose an Erasmus programme for the Mediterranean region?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The Commission has not proposed a separate 'Erasmus programme for the Mediterranean countries'. The new Erasmus+ programme includes a strong international dimension through which many higher education opportunities will be open to individuals and institutions from Southern Mediterranean countries.

More specifically, the Erasmus programme is also open to higher education institutions, students and staff from partner countries outside the EU. It funds student and staff mobility at all levels of higher education. Joint Master degrees are offered by consortia of EU and non-EU universities; the Commission provides high-level scholarships to excellent students and staff worldwide to participate in the joint Master degrees. Finally, the Commission finances capacity building actions in Southern Mediterranean countries, i.e. joint projects to fund curriculum development and modernisation, new diplomas, modern teaching and learning practices, upgrading of facilities and equipment, improving university governance and creating better links between higher education and the world of work.

The European Council has requested the Commission to facilitate the development of two more Macro-Regional Strategies: the Adriatic & Ionian Strategy (2014) and the Alpine Strategy (2015). The process of establishing such strategies is bottom-up: Member States and their regions have to create the necessary conditions and establish a closer cooperation within a macro-regional or sea-basin strategy. To date the Council has not requested the Commission to facilitate the development of a strategy for the Mediterranean region.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004607/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Viitorul proiect Nabucco în contextul crizei din pensinsula Crimeea

Comisia a adoptat până în prezent două strategii macroregionale: Strategia UE pentru regiunea Mării Baltice și Strategia UE pentru regiunea Dunării. Parlamentul European a solicitat, în repetate rânduri, elaborarea unei strategii a UE pentru regiunea Mării Negre. Criza din peninsula Crimeea a arătat că este necesară o strategie a UE pentru regiunea Marii Negre și o politică energetică a UE care să permită diversificarea surselor și a rutelor de aprovizionare cu energie. Proiectul Nabucco permite reducerea dependenței energetice a UE de gazul importat din Rusia.

În contextul crizei din peninsula Crimeea, aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere pentru continuarea proiectului Nabucco, proiect strategic pentru siguranța energetică a UE?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(11 iunie 2014)

Comisia Europeană își păstrează angajamentul de a sprijini diversificarea aprovizionării cu gaz în Europa de Sud-Est. Aceasta ar putea fi realizată prin modernizarea funcționalității rețelei existente sau, alternativ, prin dezvoltarea unei noi infrastructuri paneuropene prin care să se sprijine diversificarea surselor de gaz și a rutelor sale, precum și a partenerilor comerciali.

Importanța strategică a unor astfel de proiecte a fost recunoscută prin identificarea lor ca proiecte de interes comun în temeiul Regulamentul privind liniile directoare pentru infrastructurile energetice transeuropene
(http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/ pci/pci_en.htm).

Lista include un proiect de construire a unui gazoduct din Bulgaria până în Austria, prin România și Ungaria, care este în conformitate cu obiectivul și ruta gazoductului Nabucco.

Pentru a sprijini dezvoltarea lor rapidă, proiectele de interes comun beneficiază de un proces de autorizare facilitată, de un tratament de mai bun din punct de vedere al reglementării și, de asemenea, de posibilitatea acordării unui sprijin financiar prin intermediul Mecanismului pentru interconectarea Europei.

În 2007 a fost lansată o inițiativă pentru regiunea Mării Negre, denumită Sinergia Mării Negre, care vizează cooperarea regională, inclusiv în domeniul energiei. În plus, strategia UE pentru regiunea Dunării, foarte activă în domeniul energiei, acoperă din punct de vedere geografic și Europa de Sud-Est, precum și țările membre ale Comunității Energiei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004607/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Future Nabucco project in the context of the crisis in the Crimean peninsula

Up to now, the Commission has adopted two macro-regional strategies: the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea region and the EU strategy for the Danube region. Parliament has repeatedly called for an EU strategy to be drawn up for the Black Sea region. The crisis in the Crimean peninsula has demonstrated the need for an EU strategy for the Black Sea region and an EU energy policy that will allow the diversification of energy sources and supply routes. The Nabucco project will make it possible to reduce the EU's energy dependency on gas imports from Russia.

In the context of the crisis in the Crimean peninsula, what steps will the Commission take to continue work on the Nabucco project, which is a strategic project for the EU's energy security?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The European Commission remains committed to support gas supply diversification in South East Europe. This could be achieved through the functionality upgrade of the existing grid or alternatively through the development of new pan-European infrastructure supporting the diversification of gas sources, routes and commercial counterparts.

The strategic importance of such projects has been recognised through their identification as Projects of Common Interest pursuant to the regulation on the Guidelines for the trans-European Energy Infrastructure (http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/ pci/pci_en.htm).

The list includes a gas pipeline project from Bulgaria to Austria via Romania and Hungary that is compliant with the objective and routing of Nabucco.

In order to support their swift development, Projects of Common Interest benefit from a streamlined permitting process, an improved regulatory treatment and can also benefit from financing support through the Connecting Europe Facility.

An initiative for the Black Sea Region, Black Sea Synergy, targeted at regional cooperation, including in the energy field, was launched in 2007. In addition, the EU Strategy for the Danube region, very active in energy matters, also covers geographically South-East Europe and the Energy Community countries.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004608/14
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: E-learning

E-learning este în faza de început în sistemul de învățământ superior românesc.

Un număr mare de studenți români aleg să studieze două cursuri separate, cu scopul de a avea mai multe șanse pe piața forței de muncă. Astfel de oameni sunt ambițioși, talentați și doresc să folosească timpul lor la universitate cât mai eficient posibil. Cu toate acestea, ei întâmpină dificultăți semnificative atunci când încearcă să participe la programele Erasmus, deoarece nu există nicio prevedere în acest program pentru studenții cu două universități făcute la distanță.

Are în vedere Comisia o strategie de încurajare a părții de suport și schimb de experiențe a acestei metode de învățare e-learning, astfel încât studenții care optează pentru ea să poată participa cu ușurință la programele Erasmus, și nu numai, și să se pună accent pe creșterea calității și eficienței în educația asistată de calculator, prin oferirea de suport teoretic, prin diseminarea bunelor practici și a experiențelor locale în e-learning, prin informarea continuă cu privire la inițiativele și evenimentele semnificative din domeniu, prin promovarea celor mai bune soluții, sisteme și servicii pentru e-learning?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(10 iunie 2014)

Programul Erasmus + oferă o serie de posibilități pentru a promova și susține activitățile asociate învățării prin mijloace electronice („e-learning”).

Prin Erasmus + se finanțează parteneriate strategice care transcend granițele, pentru a se introduce metode pedagogice inovatoare. Aceste parteneriate, compuse din cel puțin trei universități, școli, întreprinderi, organizații de cercetare, autorități publice sau organizații ale societății civile, sunt sprijinite pentru a dezvolta noi instrumente pe care instituțiile de învățământ și de formare profesională le vor utiliza pentru a îmbunătăți calitatea predării și a învățării.

În domeniul învățământului superior, aceste proiecte transnaționale au ca scop sprijinirea universităților și a colegiilor pentru a realiza obiectivele Agendei de modernizare a învățământului superior, prin dezvoltarea, transferul și punerea în aplicare a unor practici inovatoare la nivel instituțional, local, regional și național. Un accent deosebit este pus pe dezvoltarea unor noi metode pedagogice, pe promovarea învățământului prin mijloace electronice și a resurselor educaționale de înaltă calitate cu acces deschis și/sau online, incluzând cursurile online deschise și în masă. Dezvoltarea unei varietăți mai mari de moduri de studiu (de exemplu, cu orar parțial, la distanță și modular) este încurajată pentru a se asigura condiții de învățare mai flexibile. Prin aceste parteneriate strategice este sprijinită și combinarea învățării cu mobilitatea virtuală.

În plus, programul oferă studenților mobili sprijin lingvistic online înainte de începerea perioadei de studiu în străinătate, pentru a se obține beneficii maxime de pe urma programului.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004608/14
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: E-learning

E-learning is now starting to become a part of Romanian higher education.

Many Romanian students are now following two separate courses with a view to improving their opportunities on the employment market. They are ambitious, talented and keen to make the best possible use of their time at university. Despite this, they encounter major difficulties when it comes to participating in Erasmus programmes, which make no provision for distance learning at two universities.

Will the Commission encourage the provision of support and exchanges of ideas with regard to e-learning, so as to facilitate participation in Erasmus and other programmes, focusing on the use of computers to improve quality and efficiency in the education sector through the sharing of ideas, best practices and individual experiences regarding e-learning, as well as ongoing information concerning significant initiatives and developments in this field, promoting the best e-learning solutions, systems and services?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Erasmus+ programme offers several opportunities to promote and support e-learning related activities.

Erasmus+ funds Strategic Partnerships across borders to introduce innovative pedagogical approaches. These partnerships, composed of at least three universities, schools, enterprises, research organisations, public authorities, or civil society organisations, are supported to develop new tools that education and training institutions will use to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

In the area of higher education, these transnational projects aim to support universities and colleges to achieve the objectives of the Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education, through the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices at institutional, local, regional and national level. A specific emphasis is given to the development of new pedagogical approaches, the promotion of e-learning and high-quality open and/or online educational resources, including Massive Open Online Courses. The development of a greater variety of study modes (e.g. part-time, distance and modular learning) are encouraged for more flexible learning. Blended learning and virtual mobility are also supported through these strategic Partnerships.

In addition, the Programme offers online linguistic support to mobile students before the start of their period abroad to make sure that they can make the most out of it.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004609/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Sănătatea animalelor

Propunerea de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind sănătatea animalelor (COM(2013)0260) vizează să asigure un nivel ridicat de sănătate publică și de siguranță alimentară, prin minimizarea incidenței riscurilor biologice și chimice asupra oamenilor. Acest obiectiv ar urma să fie atins promovând sănătatea animală prin prevenirea și reducerea incidenței bolilor animalelor, sprijinind astfel agricultura și economia rurală.

Însă, cu toate acestea, propunerea Comisiei nu prevede o listă a bolilor și mai ales a speciilor acoperite de acest regulament.

În vederea clarificării regulamentului și pentru a asigura aplicarea unitară și coerentă a acestuia, are în vedere Comisia să elaboreze o astfel de listă?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2014)

Propunerea Comisiei de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind sănătatea animalelor ([1]) are ca scop îmbunătățirea sănătății animale prin stabilirea unui cadru general pentru prevenirea, controlul și eradicarea bolilor animalelor.

Propunerea prevede că, în vederea asigurării unor condiții uniforme pentru punerea în aplicare a dispozițiilor sale în ceea ce privește măsurile de prevenire și control al bolilor aplicabile în cazul bolilor enumerate, Comisia stabilește o listă a bolilor enumerate prin intermediul actelor de punere în aplicare.

Comisia va acționa în conformitate cu regulamentul care va fi adoptat de către colegiuitor.

([1]) COM(2013) 260 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004609/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Animal health

The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on animal health (COM(2013)0260) seeks to ensure high standards of public health and food safety by minimising the incidence of biological and chemical risks to humans. To this end, it is necessary to improve animal health by preventing and reducing the impact of animal diseases, thereby assisting agriculture and the rural economy.

However, the Commission proposal does not list animal diseases, in particular those affecting the species referred to in the proposal.

Will the Commission therefore compile such a list so as to clarify the proposal for a regulation and ensure the uniform and consistent implementation thereof?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The Commission's proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on Animal Health ([1]) aims at improving animal health by establishing a general framework for the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases.

The proposal foresees that in order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of its provisions in relation to the disease prevention and control measures applicable to listed diseases, the Commission shall establish a list of listed diseases by means of implementing acts.

The Commission will act in conformity with the regulation that will be adopted by the co-legislator.

([1]) COM(2013) 260 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004610/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Comisioanele interbancare

Regulamentul Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind comisioanele interbancare pentru operațiunile de plată pe bază de card își propune, printre altele, să scadă comisioanele interbancare pentru comercianții cu amănuntul și să îmbunătățească transparența în ceea ce privește comisioanele percepute de bănci.

Reacțiile negative din partea sectorului bancar pe marginea acestui dosar au fost numeroase, băncile invocând pierderi uriașe sau repercusiuni negative asupra investițiilor în tehnologii de plată. În acest context, băncile ar putea fi tentate să compenseze pierderile înregistrate prin costuri suplimentare pentru alte servicii.

A efectuat Comisia un studiu în acest sens? Care sunt măsurile care ar putea fi luate de Comisie sau recomandate statelor membre pentru a evita situația în care băncile vor compensa pierderile înregistrate prin creșterea costurilor în alte sectoare de servicii, de exemplu?

Răspuns dat de Almunia în numele Comisiei
(12 iunie 2014)

Propunerea de regulament privind comisioanele interbancare se bazează pe cunoștințe detaliate privind piața colectate pe parcursul desfășurării investigațiilor și consultărilor în materie de concurență. Evaluarea impactului a analizat în detaliu efectele preconizate ale regulamentului asupra băncilor, prestatorilor de servicii de plată, comercianților cu amănuntul și consumatorilor.

Evaluarea impactului a arătat că efectele probabile ale unei reduceri a comisioanelor interbancare depind de o multitudine de factori, iar prognozele trebuie făcute cu precauție. Cu toate acestea, nu s-a găsit nicio dovadă în sprijinul faptului că un nivel ridicat al comisioanelor interbancare promovează investițiile sau inovarea. Cea mai mare parte a sistemelor naționale din cadrul UE au fost create cu un nivel redus de comisioane interbancare sau fără astfel de comisioane. Ulterior, sistemele internaționale au oferit băncilor comisioane interbancare mai mari pentru a emite cardurile lor în locul celor naționale. În plus, multe investiții pentru inovare sunt realizate de partea acceptantă, care plătește comisioane interbancare emitenților. În acest caz, comisioanele interbancare ar descuraja investițiile.

În ceea ce privește riscul practicării unor comisioane mai mari pentru a compensa pierderea veniturilor, pe baza reducerilor comisioanelor bancare în alte jurisdicții nu s-a găsit nicio dovadă a unei legături sistematice cu creșterea comisioanelor percepute consumatorilor. Comisioanele interbancare reduse sunt, în general, asociate cu un grad ridicat de acceptare și de utilizare a cardurilor (de exemplu, în Țările de Jos și în Danemarca). Comisioanele percepute titularilor de carduri și măsura în care băncile pot mări aceste comisioane par să fie determinate în principal de nivelul concurenței din sectorul bancar de retail.

În sfârșit, regulamentul propus prevede întocmirea de către Comisie, la patru ani după intrarea în vigoare, a unui raport cu privire la impactul său, care îi va permite Comisiei să vadă cum a funcționat în practică.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004610/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Interchange fees

The regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on interchange fees for card-based payment transactions aims, *inter alia*, at reducing interchange fees for retailers and at enhancing transparency as regards the fees charged by banks.

The negative reactions to this document from the banking sector have been numerous, with banks claiming huge losses or adverse effects on investments in payment technologies. In this context, banks may be tempted to compensate their losses by additional costs for other services.

Has the Commission conducted a study in this respect? What measures might be taken by the Commission or recommended to the Member States, in order to prevent banks from compensating their losses by higher costs in other service sectors, for example?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The proposal for the regulation on interchange fees is based on detailed market knowledge gathered during competition investigations and consultations. The Impact Assessment analysed in detail its expected effects on banks, payment providers, retailers and consumers.

The Impact Assessment revealed that the likely effects of a decrease of interchange fees depend on a variety of factors, and caution is needed when making forecasts. However, no evidence was found that high interchange fees promote investment or innovation. Most EU domestic schemes were established with low or no interchange fees. Then international schemes offered higher interchange fees to banks to issue their cards instead. Furthermore, many investments for innovation are made by the acquiring side, which pays interchange fees to issuers. Interchange fees would then discourage investment.

As to the risk of higher charges to compensate for lost revenues, based on interchange fee reductions in other jurisdictions, no evidence was found of a systematic link with increased consumer charges. Low interchange fees are generally associated with high acceptance and use of cards (e.g. the Netherlands and in Denmark). Cardholder fees and the extent to which banks can increase them seem to be determined primarily by the level of competition in retail banking.

Finally, the proposed Regulation foresees a report by the Commission on its impact four years after entry into force, allowing the Commission to see how it has worked in practice.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004611/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Măsurile de protecție împotriva organismelor dăunătoare plantelor

Propunerea de regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind măsurile de protecție împotriva organismelor dăunătoare plantelor face parte din pachetul complet de revizuire a legislației actuale privind sănătatea plantelor, calitatea materialului de reproducere a plantelor, sănătatea animalelor, controalele oficiale privind plantele, animalele, produsele alimentare și furajele, precum și cheltuielile Uniunii Europene referitoare la aceste politici.

Domeniul de aplicare al regulamentului este însă limitat, din sfera sa de aplicare fiind excluse regiunile ultraperiferice.

În contextul în care UE dorește să valorifice atuurile regiunilor ultraperiferice ca și pârghie pentru dezvoltarea economică în sectoarele cu o înaltă valoare adăugată, de ce nu a considerat Comisia necesară extinderea acestei reglementări și pe teritoriul acestora?

Are în vedere Comisia alte măsuri specifice privind măsurile de protecție împotriva organismelor dăunătoare plantelor pentru aceste regiuni?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(30 mai 2014)

Unul dintre principalele obiective ale propunerii ([1]) în cauză a Comisiei îl reprezintă protejarea teritoriului Uniunii împotriva introducerii organismelor dăunătoare plantelor din alte zone ale lumii. Prin urmare, este important să fie luați în considerare factorii biogeografici atunci când se determină acești dăunători și teritoriile în care aceștia se află. Prin urmare, teritoriile non-europene (regiunile ultraperiferice) ale statelor membre menționate la articolul 355 alineatul (1) din TFUE ar trebuie să fie excluse din domeniul de aplicare teritorială al regulamentului în cauză datorită condițiilor lor ecoclimatice și biologice diferite. Teritoriile respective sunt enumerate în anexa I la propunere.

Pe baza unei astfel de abordări, dăunătorii, plantele și produsele vegetale din aceste teritorii vor face obiectul unor interdicții sau condiții de import specifice, astfel cum este, de asemenea, cazul pentru țările terțe. Măsurile specifice în cauză se vor baza pe o evaluare a riscului și vor depinde de natura fiecărui dăunător, precum și de natura și utilizările respectivelor plante sau produse vegetale care îi pot găzdui.

([1]) Propunere a Comisiei de Regulament al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului privind măsurile de protecție împotriva organismelor dăunătoare plantelor, COM(2013)267 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004611/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Protective measures against pests of plants

The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on protective measures against pests of plants is part of a complete revision package for the current legislation on plant health, the quality of plant reproductive material, animal health, official plant controls, animals, food and feed, as well as the European Union's expenses related to these policies.

However, the scope of the regulation is limited, as it excludes ultra-peripheral regions.

Considering that the EU wishes to leverage the advantages of ultra-peripheral regions for economic growth in high-value-added sectors, why did the Commission not deem it appropriate to extend this regulation to their territory as well?

Does the Commission envisage other specific actions as regards the protective measures against pests of plants for these regions?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

One of the main objectives of that Commission proposal ([1]) is the protection of the Union territory from the introduction of pests of plants from other areas of the world. It is thus important to take into account bio-geographical factors when determining those pests and the territories where they are present. Consequently, non-European territories (outermost regions) of Member States referred to in Article 355(1) TFEU should be excluded from the territorial scope of this regulation due their different eco-climatic and biological conditions. Those territories are listed in Annex I of the proposal.

On the basis of such an approach, the pests, plants and plant products of those territories will be subject under specific import prohibitions or conditions, as also applicable for third countries. Those specific measures will be based on a risk assessment and will depend on the nature of each pest, and the nature and uses of the respective plants or plant products that may host them.

([1]) Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on protective measures against pests of plants, COM(2013) 267 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004612/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Programul destinat comunităților vulnerabile din Africa Subsahariană

În data de 9 aprilie, comisarul european pentru dezvoltare, Andris Piebalgs, a anunțat un nou program în valoare de 33 de milioane de euro care are obiectivul de a îmbunătăți guvernanța terenurilor și de a ajuta la îmbunătățirea securității alimentare și nutriționale pentru micii fermieri și pentru comunitățile vulnerabile din Africa Subsahariană.

Care sunt măsurile pe care le are în vedere Comisia pentru a se asigura ca fondurile distribuite prin intermediul programului vor fi cheltuite oportun și vor duce la îndeplinirea ambițioaselor obiective?

Răspuns dat de dl Piebalgs în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2014)

Programul de asistență pentru guvernanța terenurilor în Africa, lansat în cadrul conferinței care a avut loc la Parlament la 9 aprilie 2014, are o valoare de 33 de milioane EUR. Acesta se va derula în zece țări africane: Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Etiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Somalia, Sudanul de Sud și Swaziland. Programul vizează, de asemenea, sprijinirea capacităților continentale, prin intermediul inițiativei de politică funciară în Africa (*Land Policy Initiative* — LPI), pentru a dezvolta programe de formare profesională, a promova schimburile de bune practici, a valorifica lecțiile învățate și a stimula comunicarea.

Proiectul a fost dezvoltat pornind de la selectarea celor mai promițătoare propuneri prezentate de delegațiile UE, respectând criterii de calitate care garantează autodeterminarea, eficiența și impactul. Aceste propuneri vor fi implementate în țările selectate recurgând la procese și parteneriate specifice și asigurând o utilizare eficientă a fondurilor (între 2 și 5,5 milioane EUR pentru fiecare țară).

Pentru a valorifica la maximum autodeterminarea Africii și sustenabilitatea sistemelor instituite în cadrul programului, monitorizarea și evaluarea vor fi efectuate de către LPI, cu sprijin din partea FAO.

Doamna deputat poate consulta detalii suplimentare în fișa acțiunii disponibilă la următoarea adresă:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2013/af_aap_2013_dci-food_p2.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004612/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Programme for the vulnerable communities in sub-Saharan Africa

On 9 April, the European Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, announced a new programme amounting to 33 million euros aimed at improving land governance and at helping improve food and nutrition security for small farmers and for the vulnerable communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

What measures does the Commission envisage in order to make sure that the funds allocated under the programme will be appropriately spent and will help achieve these ambitious objectives?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The programme to support land governance in Africa launched at the 9th April 2014 conference in the Parliament amounts to EUR 33 million. It will be rolled out across ten African countries: Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan and Swaziland. The programme also aims at supporting continental capacities, through the African Land Policy Initiative (LPI) to develop training programmes, exchanges of best practice, to capitalise on lessons learnt and enhance communication.

The project has been developed from the selection of the most promising proposals submitted by the EU Delegations, following quality criteria guaranteeing ownership, efficiency and impact. They will be implemented in the selected countries using tailor-made partnerships and processes, securing that funds allocated will be efficiently spent (EUR 2 to 5.5 million per country).

To maximise African ownership and the sustainability of the systems developed by the programme, the monitoring and evaluation will be done by the LPI, with support from the FAO.

The Honourable Member will find additional details in the Action Fiche at
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2013/af_aap_2013_dci-food_p2.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004613/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Competențele cetățenilor europeni

Sondajul privind competențele adulților (PIAAC) realizat de OCDE și sprijinit de DG Educație și Cultură din cadrul Comisiei arată că 20 % din populația UE în vârstă de muncă are competențe de alfabetizare și competențe numerice slabe, iar 25 % dintre adulți nu au competențele necesare pentru a utiliza TIC. Cel mai alarmant este faptul că aproape 75 de milioane de adulți sunt lipsiți de competențe de citire și de scriere de bază. Investițiile pentru ameliorarea competențelor de citire și scriere în rândul cetățenilor de toate vârstele au sens economic, producând beneficii concrete pentru indivizi și pentru societate. Nu în ultimul rând, cei cu nivelul educațional cel mai scăzut sunt de două ori mai expuși riscului de șomaj decât majoritatea populației, așadar sărăcia și nivelul scăzut al competențelor de citire și scriere se află într-un cerc vicios, alimentându-se reciproc.

Pe termen scurt, care sunt măsurile pe care Comisia le are în vedere pentru ca la nivel european cetățenii să-și îmbunătățească standardele în ceea ce privește competențele de scriere și citire?

În ceea ce privește segmentul populației adulte, competențele de scriere și de citire, dar mai ales cele în domeniul informatic trebuie actualizate constant. Cum poate stimula Comisia statele membre să acorde o importanță mai mare acestui segment, care este de multe ori neglijat?

Răspuns dat de dna Vassiliou în numele Comisiei
(4 iunie 2014)

În conformitate cu articolul 165 din Tratatul privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene, responsabilitatea față de conținutul și de organizarea sistemelor de educație și de formare le revine în întregime statelor membre. Prin metoda deschisă de coordonare, Comisia sprijină statele membre în eforturile lor de s-și îmbunătăți sistemele de educație și de formare, inclusiv învățământul pentru adulți.

De la publicarea, în 2012, a raportului grupului de experți la nivel înalt privind alfabetizarea ([1]), îmbunătățirea alfabetizării la toate vârstele a reprezentat o prioritate de bază a politicii UE în domeniul educației. Programul Erasmus+ include și învățământul pentru adulți și sprijină parteneriatele strategice, schimburile de profesori care predau alfabetizarea și dezvoltarea profesională a acestora. Printre activitățile prioritare se numără elaborarea unor metode de învățare și de predare și a unor abordări pedagogice pentru cursanții adulți — în special a celor care oferă abilități esențiale și competențe de bază.

Planul european pentru învățarea în rândul adulților, care vizează crearea mai multor oportunități de învățare pentru toți adulții, se concentrează în special asupra competențelor de citire, de scriere și digitale de care au nevoie adulții dezavantajați și slab calificați. Comisia finanțează, în fiecare stat membru, un coordonator național ale cărui atribuții sunt promovarea acțiunilor de sensibilizare destinate adulților care au nevoie să-și îmbunătățească competențele de bază și coordonarea activităților realizate de diferiți actori și părți interesate.

Crearea de oportunități de învățare pentru toți cetățenii poate fi realizată mai eficient prin cooperarea strategică dintre furnizorii de servicii de învățământ pentru adulți și autoritățile locale/regionale. În 2014 Comisia a publicat o cerere de propuneri adresată autorităților din statele membre, menită să stimuleze crearea unor centre multifuncționale care să le ofere adulților cu deficiențe în materie de competențe de bază servicii de orientare și de învățare la nivel local.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004613/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 April 2014)

Subject: Skills of European citizens

The Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) conducted by the OECD and supported by DG Education and Culture of the European Commission shows that 20% of the EU's working-age population have low literacy and numeracy skills, and 25% of adults do not have the necessary skills to use ICT. What is most alarming is the fact that nearly 75 million adults lack basic reading and writing skills. Investment in improving reading and writing skills among citizens of all ages makes economic sense, as it brings tangible benefits to individuals and to society at large. Last but not least, people with the lowest educational level are at twice the risk of unemployment compared to the majority of the population, meaning that poverty and poor reading and writing skills form a vicious circle, with one being the cause of the other.

In the short term, what measures does the Commission envisage at European level for citizens to improve their writing and reading skills?

As to the adult population, writing and reading skills and, most notably, computer skills must be constantly brought up-to-date. How can the Commission stimulate the Member States to attach higher importance to this often neglected segment?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission supports Member States in their efforts to improve their education and training systems, including adult education.

Since the publication of the report from the High Level Group of Experts on Literacy in 2012 ([1]), improving literacy at all ages has been an underlying priority of EU education policy. The Erasmus+ programme covers adult education and supports strategic partnerships and the professional development and exchanges of literacy teachers. Prioritised activities include the development of learning and teaching methodologies and pedagogical approaches for adult learners — especially those delivering key competences and basic skills.

The European Agenda for Adult Learning, which seeks to further learning opportunities for all adults, focuses in particular on the reading, writing and digital competence needs of low-skilled and disadvantaged adults. The Commission funds a National Coordinator in each Member State, whose tasks it is to promote outreach to adults who need to improve their basic skills and to coordinate the work of different actors and stakeholders.

Providing learning opportunities for all citizens can be better achieved through strategic cooperation between adult learning providers and local/regional authorities. In 2014 the Commission published a call for proposals to Member State authorities to stimulate the creation of multipurpose centres to provide local guidance and learning provision for adults with basic skills deficits.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004615/14
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Origin of Commission proposals

Could the Commission update its answer to Parliamentary Question E-003775/2010?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission does not keep summary information on the complex issue of origin of legislative proposals. The figures concerning the year 2008 were the result of a one-off research exercise. At the present time the Commission is not in a position to undertake the lengthy research that a detailed answer to the Honourable Member's question would require.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004616/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Énergies renouvelables

La Commission a décidé de demander aux États membres de l'Union européenne de réduire les aides publiques accordées aux énergies renouvelables, ainsi que les redevances payées par les industries qui utilisent beaucoup d'énergie fossile.

1. En prenant des mesures qui vont freiner la transition énergétique, la Commission va-t-elle donc prolonger et encourager l'utilisation des énergies fossiles, dont on connaît pourtant bien aujourd'hui l'impact sur notre santé et l'environnement?

2. Cela ne va-t-il pas retarder aussi le développement et l'utilisation des énergies renouvelables, alors que l'on sait qu'elles sont l'une des clés majeures pour limiter le réchauffement climatique?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

Les énergies renouvelables jouent un rôle essentiel dans notre transition vers une économie à faible intensité de carbone. Le grand objectif de 20 % d'énergies renouvelables dans la consommation finale brute d'énergie, établi en 2008 dans le paquet législatif «20-20-20», a largement contribué à encourager le déploiement des énergies renouvelables à l'échelle européenne. Selon les dernières données d'Eurostat, la majorité des pays de l'UE ont bien progressé en vue de satisfaire à leur obligation de 20 % de sources d'énergie renouvelables d'ici à 2020, et trois États membres ont déjà atteint leur objectif contraignant dans ce domaine. En outre, le 22 janvier 2014, la Commission a adopté la communication «Un cadre d'action en matière de climat et d'énergie pour la période comprise entre 2020 et 2030» ([1]), qui proposait de porter la part de sources d'énergie renouvelables à 27 % au moins d'ici à 2030 et démontrait le soutien permanent de la Commission en faveur de ces énergies.

Le progrès technologique, la baisse des coûts d'investissement et l'intensification de la production ont permis aux technologies liées aux sources d'énergie renouvelables d'arriver à maturité, ce qui a entraîné la nécessité de réviser les instruments d'aide aux énergies renouvelables dans un certain nombre d'États membres. La Commission estime donc que l'intervention des pouvoirs publics doit s'adapter aux évolutions du marché. Les orientations pour l'intervention publique sur les marchés de l'électricité (5 novembre 2013) ([2]) et les lignes directrices concernant les aides d'État à la protection de l'environnement et à l'énergie pour la période 2014-2020 (9 avril 2014) ([3]) visent à faciliter la transition énergétique en aidant les États membres à adopter progressivement des systèmes souples et fondés sur le marché.

([1]) COM(2014) 15 final.
([2]) C(2013) 7243 final et annexes.
([3]) C(2014) 2322.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004616/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Renewables

The Commission has decided to ask the Member States to reduce state aid for renewables and also the charges paid by industries which use large quantities of fossil fuel energy.

1. By taking measures that will hold back the energy transition, will the Commission not thereby prolong and encourage the use of fossil fuels, even though we know very well what impact they have on our health and environment?

2. Will it not also slow down the development and use of renewables, which are one of the keys to limiting global warming?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

Renewable energy plays a key role in our transition towards a low-carbon economy. The headline target of 20% share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption, introduced with the 20-20-20 legislative package in 2008, has served well its purpose to encourage renewables deployment at the European level. According to the latest Eurostat data, the majority of EU countries show good progress towards their 20% RES obligation by 2020 and three Member States have already reached their mandatory renewables target. Moreover, on 22 January 2014, the Commission adopted the communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030' ([1]), which proposed to increase the share of renewables to at least 27% by 2030 and demonstrated the Commission's continuous support for renewables.

Technological progress, decreasing investment costs and production up-scaling have allowed for renewable energy technologies to mature and have subsequently called for the revision of renewables support instruments in a number of Member States. The Commission thus believes that public interventions should adjust to market developments. Both the Guidance for state intervention in electricity markets (5 November 2013) ([2]) and the Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection and energy 2014-2020 (9 April 2014) ([3]) aim at smoothening the energy transition by providing Member States with directions on how to gradually move towards flexible and market-based systems.

([1]) COM(2014) 15 final.
([2]) C(2013) 7243 final and annexes.
([3]) C(2014)2322.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004617/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Ruling fiscal (agrément fiscal) de KBC

La Commission a introduit auprès des autorités belges une demande d'information relative au ruling fiscal (agrément fiscal) dont a bénéficié KBC le mois dernier. Le cabinet du ministre des Finances indique qu'il collaborera pleinement avec les instances européennes et nie avoir voulu influencer une décision en faveur du bancassureur. La Direction générale de la Concurrence de la Commission a introduit une demande d'information afin de déterminer les conditions dans lesquelles la décision a été prise.

La Commission pense-t-elle que le principe du mécanisme du ruling (agrément) cache des aides d'État? Sur quoi la Commission se base-t-elle?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2014)

En règle générale, un ruling fiscal est susceptible de constituer une aide d'État s'il confère un avantage sélectif à une entreprise et fausse ainsi les échanges entre États membres et menace de fausser la concurrence entre eux. Selon la jurisprudence, la notion d'aide comprend non seulement des prestations positives mais aussi des interventions qui, sous des formes diverses, allègent les charges qui, normalement, grèvent le budget d'une entreprise. De plus, le traitement des contribuables sur une base discrétionnaire peut conférer à l'application individuelle d'une mesure générale la qualité de mesure sélective, notamment lorsque l'exercice du pouvoir discrétionnaire va au-delà de la simple gestion des recettes fiscales selon des critères objectifs.

En l'occurrence, suite à la couverture des faits par la presse belge, la Commission a demandé des informations auprès de l'État belge mais n'est pas en mesure de donner des commentaires. La Commission ne donne généralement pas d'informations sur une procédure avant qu'une décision officielle ne soit prise.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004617/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: KBC tax ruling (tax approval)

The Commission has asked the Belgian authorities for information about the tax ruling issued to KBC last month. The Finance Minister's office says that it will cooperate fully with the European authorities and denies having sought to influence a decision in favour of the banking and insurance group. The Commission's Directorate-General for Competition has put in a request for information in order to determine the circumstances in which the decision was taken.

Does the Commission not think that this ruling (approval) mechanism conceals state aid? On what does the Commission base its position?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

As a general rule, a tax ruling might constitute state aid if it gives a company a selective advantage and thereby distorts trade between Member States and threatens to distort competition. According to case-law, the concept of aid embraces not only positive benefits, but also measures which in various forms mitigate the charges which are normally included in the budget of an undertaking. Moreover, treating taxpayers on a discretionary basis may mean that the individual application of a general measure takes on the features of a selective measure, in particular where the exercise of the discretionary power goes beyond the simple management of tax revenue by reference to objective criteria.

In the case at hand, the Commission — following press coverage in the Belgian press — has requested information from the Belgian State, but is not in a position to comment. The Commission generally does not provide information on proceedings before an official decision is taken.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004618/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Accès à l'eau potable

La Commission a répondu à une pétition paneuropéenne soutenue par plus de 1,8 million de personnes qui réclamaient la reconnaissance de l'accès à l'eau potable comme un droit humain avec un ensemble de mesures qui n'incluaient pas un engagement à produire une nouvelle législation.

Pourquoi la Commission a-t-elle refusé de prendre cette demande en considération?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(2 juin 2014)

La Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se référer à la réponse donnée à sa question écrite précédente E-003408/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004618/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Access to drinking water

The Commission has responded to a pan-European petition supported by over 1.8 million people calling for access to drinking water to be recognised as a human right with a set of measures which did not include a commitment to produce new legislation.

Why has the Commission refused to consider this request?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission invites the Honourable Member to refer to the answer given to his previous Written Question E-003408/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004619/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Journalistes d'Al-Jazeera en Égypte

Mohamed Fahmy, Peter Greste et Baher Mohamed, journalistes de la section anglaise d'Al-Jazeera, ainsi que cinq étudiants égyptiens, sont accusés d'appartenir ou d'avoir prêté leur aide à une organisation terroriste interdite, à savoir les Frères musulmans. Leur procès doit reprendre le 10 avril.

«Les autorités égyptiennes sont en train de persécuter des journalistes qui n'ont fait qu'exercer leur profession», a déclaré Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, directrice adjointe du programme Moyen-Orient et Afrique du Nord d'Amnesty International.

«Pour l'instant, le ministère public n'a produit aucun élément convaincant et les journalistes concernés semblent n'être que des pions dans le différend qui oppose [l'Égypte] au Qatar. Mohamed Fahmy, Peter Greste et Baher Mohamed sont des prisonniers d'opinion qui doivent être libérés immédiatement et sans condition.»

Ces trois hommes sont détenus depuis le 29 décembre 2013, date à laquelle les forces de sécurité ont arrêté Mohamed Fahmy et Peter Greste à l'hôtel Marriott et Baher Mohamed à son domicile. Les cinq étudiants égyptiens, quant à eux, ont été arrêtés deux jours plus tard.

Par ailleurs, les autorités poursuivent leur répression de plus grande ampleur pour faire taire les voix dissidentes, aussi bien les Frères musulmans et leurs sympathisants que les autres militants de l'opposition qui critiquent le régime.

1. Partagez-vous l'idée que la détention prolongée de trois journalistes d'Al-Jazeera inculpés de falsification d'informations et d'appartenance au mouvement interdit des Frères musulmans est une mesure motivée par la vengeance des autorités égyptiennes?

2. Quelle est votre réaction?

3. Une entrevue avec les autorités est-elle prévue pour tenter d'améliorer la situation?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est tout à fait consciente des procédures engagées contre des journalistes en Égypte.

L'UE suit, attentivement et avec une préoccupation croissante, la situation des Droits de l'homme en Égypte, et notamment celle des journalistes et des médias. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a exprimé ses craintes au sujet des menaces qui pèsent sur les Droits de l'homme à travers de nombreuses déclarations ainsi que lors de rencontres avec ses homologues égyptiens, dont la dernière fois au cours de sa visite en Égypte au mois d'avril.

Dans les conclusions du Conseil du 10 février dernier, les ministres des affaires étrangères des États membres de l'Union déplorent «la détérioration des conditions dans lesquelles travaille la presse» et demandent «instamment aux autorités intérimaires égyptiennes et aux médias d'État de permettre à tous les journalistes d'exercer leur profession en toute sécurité et de mettre un terme aux arrestations à motivation politique ainsi qu'aux actes d'intimidation subis par les journalistes égyptiens et étrangers et aux campagnes menées à leur encontre». Ces conclusions indiquent en outre que «la liberté d'expression, de réunion et de manifestation pacifique doit être préservée».

L'Union, notamment par la voix de son représentant spécial pour les Droits de l'homme lors de sa visite de février en Égypte, a appelé les autorités intérimaires à assurer l'équité des procès à venir et le respect des procédures adéquates, en garantissant le droit des prévenus à un procès équitable et engagé dans des délais raisonnables, sur la base d'accusations claires et à la suite d'une enquête adéquate et indépendante, ainsi que le droit de bénéficier de l'assistance d'un avocat et d'avoir des contacts avec les membres de leur famille, conformément aux normes internationales en la matière.

Malheureusement, seuls les pays bénéficiant d'un lien consulaire ont été autorisés à entrer dans la salle d'audience après autorisation préalable des autorités. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante de la Commission et la délégation de l'UE au Caire se sont engagées, dans les limites de leur mandat, à fournir le soutien nécessaire aux citoyens européens concernés et, plus généralement, à suivre de près la situation des journalistes poursuivis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004619/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Al Jazeera journalists in Egypt

Al Jazeera English staff Mohamed Fahmy, Peter Greste and Baher Mohamed, along with five Egyptian students, stand accused of belonging to or assisting banned terrorist organisation the Muslim Brotherhood. Their trial resumed on 10 April 2014.

'What the Egyptian authorities are doing is vindictive persecution of journalists for merely doing their jobs,' said Amnesty International's Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Middle East and North Africa Programme Deputy Director.

'So far, the Prosecution has failed to produce any convincing evidence and the journalists appear to be pawns in the hands of the [Egyptian] authorities in their on-going dispute with Qatar. Mohamed Fahmy, Peter Greste and Baher Mohamed are prisoners of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.'

The three men have been detained since 29 December 2013, when security forces arrested Mohamed Fahmy and Peter Greste at the Marriott Hotel in Cairo and Baher Mohamed at his home. The five Egyptian students were arrested two days later.

The authorities are also continuing a wider crackdown on dissent, targeting both the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters as well as other opposition activists who are critical of the authorities.

1. Does the High Representative share the view that the Egyptian authorities' continued detention of three Al Jazeera journalists charged with falsifying news and involvement with the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood movement is vindictive persecution?

2. What is her response?

3. Does she intend to hold a meeting with the Egyptian authorities in an attempt to improve the situation?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The HR/VP is well aware of the cases of journalists under trial in Egypt.

The EU is following the human rights' situation in Egypt closely and with growing concern, including the situation of the media and journalists. The HR/VP expressed her concern on the worrying human rights' situation in numerous statements, as well as in meetings with Egyptian counterparts, lastly during her visit to Egypt in April.

The Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States deplore in the Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014 'the deteriorating climate for the press' and call 'upon the Egyptian interim authorities and state media to ensure safe working environment for all journalists and to end politicized arrests as well as intimidation of and incitement against domestic and foreign journalists'. The conclusions state further that 'freedoms of expression, assembly and peaceful arrest must be safeguarded'.

The EU, including by its Special Representative on Human Rights during his visit to Egypt in February, expressed its expectation vis-à-vis the interim authorities that the upcoming trials will be fair and due process will be respected, ensuring the defendant's rights to a fair and timely trial based on clear charges and proper and independent investigations andthe right of access and contact to lawyers and family members, in line with international standards.

Unfortunately, only the countries with a consular connection have been allowed to enter the court room upon prior permission from authorities. The HR/VP and in particular the EU Delegation on the ground in Cairo are committed to provide the necessary support to European citizens involved within the limits of their mandate and more in general to take under close scrutiny the situation of prosecuted journalists.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004620/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: M. Duncan et la Côte d'Ivoire

En marge du 4e sommet UE-Afrique, Daniel Kablan Duncan, Premier ministre de Côte d'Ivoire, s'est entretenu avec plusieurs hauts responsables de la Commission dans le cadre de rencontres bilatérales. Dans un point fait à la presse mercredi soir dans la capitale belge où se tiennent ces assises, Daniel Kablan Duncan a indiqué avoir notamment rassuré ses interlocuteurs sur le processus de réconciliation nationale en Côte d'Ivoire.

Sur cette question, les discussions ont porté sur «le statut de l'opposition, le financement des partis politiques…», a précisé M. Duncan, indiquant que, plus généralement, les échanges se sont déroulés autour de «la préparation des prochaines élections» ivoiriennes prévues pour l'année prochaine.

La Côte d'Ivoire continue donc de jouir de la confiance des autorités de l'Union européenne, a également rassuré le chef du gouvernement. Au nom du président Alassane Ouattara, qu'il représente au 4e sommet UE-Afrique, Daniel Kablan Duncan a par ailleurs exprimé sur la situation économique générale de la Côte d'Ivoire lors de la journée inaugurale de ladite réunion.

Quelles sont les conclusions européennes sur la rencontre avec M. Duncan?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

Lors du sommet UE-Afrique, le premier ministre Duncan a rencontré le commissaire Piebalgs et le secrétaire général du SEAS Pierre Vimont.

Le premier ministre Duncan était parfaitement conscient des préoccupations de l'UE en ce qui concerne le processus de réconciliation en Côte d'Ivoire, la nécessité de lutter contre l'impunité, d'assurer une justice impartiale après la crise postélectorale, de mener des réformes rigoureuses dans le secteur de la sécurité et d'assurer un processus électoral transparent et inclusif. Le premier ministre Duncan a déclaré que le gouvernement progressait sur tous ces dossiers et a fait part de certains résultats, tels qu'une amélioration du dialogue avec l'opposition.

L'UE estime ces améliorations positives mais juge encore nécessaire de continuer à encourager le gouvernement à faire des progrès supplémentaires, en particulier dans la perspective des élections présidentielles de 2015, qui représentent un test important pour la stabilité de la Côte d'Ivoire.

L'UE estime que les évolutions positives, telles que l'amélioration du dialogue local, résultent peut-être en partie des pressions internationales, telles que celles exercées par l'UE. Dès lors, l'UE maintiendra ses efforts afin de continuer à promouvoir une justice impartiale, la réconciliation et des élections pacifiques en Côte d'Ivoire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004620/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Daniel Kablan Duncan and Côte d'Ivoire

On the sidelines of the 4th EU-Africa summit, Daniel Kablan Duncan, the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire, held talks with several senior Commission officials in the context of bilateral meetings. At a press conference on Wednesday evening in Brussels, where the summit was taking place, Mr Duncan said that he had given reassurances about the national reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire.

He said that, on that issue, the talks had covered the status of the opposition and the funding of political parties and that, more generally, they had discussed the preparations for the Ivorian elections set to take place next year.

He made clear that Côte d'Ivoire therefore continued to enjoy the confidence of the EU authorities. On behalf of President Alassane Ouattara, who he was representing at the 4th EU-Africa summit, Mr Duncan also referred on the opening day of the summit to Côte d'Ivoire's general economic situation.

What conclusions did the EU side draw from its meeting with Mr Duncan?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

During the EU-Africa Summit, Prime Minister Duncan met Commissioner Piebalgs and the Secretary General of the EEAS Pierre Vimont.

PM Duncan was well aware of the EU concerns over the reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, the necessity to fight against impunity, to ensure impartial justice after the post electoral crisis, to carry out a sound reform of the security sector and to ensure a transparent and inclusive electoral process. PM Duncan declared that the governement is progressing on all these dossiers and mentioned some accomplishments such as an improved dialogue with the opposition.

The EU considers positively these improvements, but still considers necessary to continue encouraging the government to make further progress, in particular in view of the 2015 presidential elections that represent an important test for the stability of Côte d'Ivoire.

The EU considers that positive evolutions such as improved local dialogue may partly be due to international pressure, particularly by the EU. The EU will therefore maintain its efforts to further promote impartial justice, reconciliation and peaceful elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004621/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Violence envers les Roms

«On constate une nette augmentation de la fréquence des violences contre les Roms en Europe ces dernières années. La réponse à ce phénomène très inquiétant est loin d'être satisfaisante. Il est inadmissible que, dans notre Europe moderne, des communautés roms vivent sous la menace constante des violences et des attaques s'apparentant à des pogroms.

Trop souvent, les dirigeants européens cèdent aux préjugés qui alimentent les violences anti-Roms en leur collant l'étiquette d'antisociaux et d'indésirables. Tout en condamnant les exemples les plus flagrants de violences contre les Roms, les gouvernements rechignent à reconnaître l'ampleur du problème et se montrent peu réactifs lorsqu'il s'agit de les combattre. De son côté, l'Union européenne hésite à remettre en cause ses États membres au sujet de la discrimination systémique et criante dont sont victimes les Roms», déclare Amnesty international.

1. Selon la Commission, les États européens ne font-il pas assez barrage à la discrimination, à l'intimidation et aux violences envers les Roms, et parfois même les favorisent-ils, comme le dénonce l'organisation?

2. La Commission possède-t-elle des statistiques en la matière?

3. Que prévoit la Commission pour lutter contre ses dérives?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Reding au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

L'Agence des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne collecte régulièrement des données sur les discriminations dont les Roms sont victimes ([1]). Elle recueille, cette année, des données de suivi (dont elle publiera les résultats en 2015).

La Commission a connaissance du rapport publié par Amnesty International et elle reconnaît l'intérêt ainsi que l'engagement actif que cette organisation manifeste à l'égard de cette question. Par la recommandation du Conseil adoptée en décembre dernier, tous les États membres sont convenus de mettre en œuvre des mesures pour lutter contre les discriminations à l'égard des Roms dans toutes les sphères de la société ([2]).

Par ailleurs, la Commission continue d'assurer le suivi de la mise en œuvre du cadre de l'UE pour les stratégies nationales d'intégration des Roms ([3]), notamment en menant des dialogues bilatéraux avec les autorités nationales pour favoriser les progrès. Cette année, elle a publié un rapport évaluant les mesures prises dans chaque État membre ([4]) en faveur de l'intégration des Roms, relatives notamment à la lutte contre les discriminations. Ce sujet même a constitué le thème central de la réunion des points de contact nationaux pour les Roms qui s'est tenue en février dernier.

La Commission a publié le 27 janvier son premier rapport ([5]) relatif à la mise en œuvre de la décision-cadre sur la lutte contre certaines formes et manifestations de racisme et de xénophobie au moyen du droit pénal ([6]). Elle mènera des discussions bilatérales avec chaque État membre tout au long de l'année pour veiller à la transposition complète et correcte de cette décision-cadre en droit interne. Il convient, enfin, de signaler que les enquêtes et les éventuelles poursuites relatives à des cas individuels de crimes racistes ou xénophobes relèvent et continueront de relever du ressort des autorités nationales compétentes en matière répressive.

([1]) Voir *EU-MIDIS Data in Focus Report 1: The Roma* (EU-MIDIS, Rapport 1 sur les données en bref, en anglais) de mai 2009, *The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States — Survey results at a glance* (La situation des Roms dans 11 États membres de l'UE — Les résultats de l'enquête en bref, en anglais) de mai 2012 et l'outil web http://fra.europa.eu/DVS/DVT/roma.php pour connaître la situation dans chacun des États membres.

([2]) Recommandation du Conseil du 9 décembre 2013 relative à des mesures efficaces d'intégration des Roms dans les États membres, JO 2013, C 378, p. 1, §§ 2.1 à 2.5.

([3]) Communication relative à un cadre de l'UE pour les stratégies nationales d'intégration des Roms, COM(2011) 173.

([4]) Rapport sur la mise en œuvre du cadre de l'UE pour les stratégies nationales d'intégration des Roms COM(2014) 209 et document de travail des services de la Commission l'accompagnant [SWD(2014)121].

([5]) Rapport relatif à la mise en œuvre de la décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI du Conseil sur la lutte contre certaines formes et manifestations de racisme et de xénophobie au moyen du droit pénal [SWD(2014) 27].

([6]) Décision-cadre 2008/913/JAI sur la lutte contre certaines formes et manifestations de racisme et de xénophobie au moyen du droit pénal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004621/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Anti-Roma violence

According to Amnesty International, 'There has been a marked rise in the frequency of anti-Roma violence in Europe in the last few years. The response to this alarming phenomenon has been woefully inadequate. It is unacceptable that in modern-day Europe some Roma communities live under the constant threat of violence and pogrom-like attacks. '

'All too often European leaders have pandered to the prejudices fuelling anti-Roma violence by branding Roma as anti-social and unwelcome. While generally condemning the most blatant examples of anti-Roma violence, authorities have been reluctant to acknowledge its extent and slow to combat it. For its part, the European Union has been reluctant to challenge member states on the systemic discrimination of Roma that is all too evident'.

1. Does the Commission believe that European states are failing to curb and in some cases even fuelling discrimination, intimidation and violence against Roma, as Amnesty International has suggested?

2. Does the Commission have any statistics on this issue?

3. What does the Commission plan to do to combat these abuses?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights regularly collects data on discrimination faced by Roma ([1]). It is collecting follow-up data this year (results available in 2015).

The Commission is aware of Amnesty International's report and acknowledges the interest and active involvement of this organisation in this issue. By means of the Council Recommendation adopted in last December, all Member States have agreed to implement measures to combat discrimination against Roma in all areas of society ([2]).

In addition, the Commission keeps monitoring the implementation of the EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies ([3]), including through bilateral dialogues with national authorities with a view to supporting progress. This year, the Commission published a report assessing steps taken on Roma integration in each Member State ([4]), including on the fight against discrimination. This very topic was the focus of the National Roma Contact Points' meeting held in last February.

The Commission's first report ([5]) on the implementation of Framework Decision on racist and xenophobic hate speech and crime was published on 27 January ([6]). Bilateral discussions will be held throughout the year with Member States to ensure its full and correct transposition into national law. It should be pointed out that the investigation and eventual prosecution of individual cases of racist and xenophobic crimes is, and will remain, within the law enforcement competence of the Member States.

([1]) See EU-MIDIS Data in Focus Report 1: The Roma of May 2009, The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States — Survey results at a glance of May 2012 and the web tool http://fra.europa.eu/DVS/DVT/roma.php for the situation in all Member States.
([2]) Council Recommendation of 9 December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States 2013/C: § 2.1 to 2.5.
([3]) Communication on An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies COM(2011) 173.
([4]) Report on the Implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies COM(2014) 209 and accompanying Staff Working Document SWD(2014) 121.
([5]) Report on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law SWD(2014) 27.
([6]) Framework Decision on racist and xenophobic hate speech and hate crime 2008/913/JHA.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004622/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Snowden: surveillance des ONG

Les dernières révélations d'Edward Snowden donnent à penser que des défenseurs des droits humains, y compris des salariés d'Amnesty International, ont très probablement été la cible d'une surveillance de la part des services d'espionnage américains et britanniques.

L'ancien consultant des services du renseignement américain et lanceur d'alerte, qui vit en exil à Moscou, a tenu ces propos lors d'une vidéoconférence avec l'Assemblée parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe (APCE), organisée le mardi 8 avril, dans l'après-midi, à Strasbourg.

Lorsqu'on lui a demandé si l'Agence nationale de la sécurité américaine (NSA) ou son équivalent britannique, le Quartier général des communications du gouvernement (GCHQ), espionnaient activement les organisations de défense des droits humains telles qu'Amnesty International et Human Rights Watch, il a répondu: «Absolument, cela ne fait aucun doute […]. La NSA a en fait visé spécifiquement les communications de dirigeants ou de membres du personnel de certaines organisations de défense des droits humains ou de la société civile.»

Ces allégations, si elles sont fondées, confirmeraient nos craintes. Il faut maintenant que soit pleinement divulguée, en toute transparence, l'ampleur de ces programmes de surveillance et que soient présentées les garanties juridiques solides mises en place pour empêcher que de telles opérations non ciblées aient de nouveau lieu.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission?

2. Va-t-elle enjoindre les autorités visées par ce scandale potentiel de s'expliquer?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

La Commission n'a cessé de faire part de ses graves préoccupations au sujet des allégations publiques lancées par M. Snowden concernant les activités de surveillance des États-Unis et elle a soulevé ces questions auprès des autorités américaines à tous les niveaux, notamment dans le cadre d'un groupe de travail ad hoc UE-États-Unis sur la protection des données et à l'occasion de réunions à haut niveau, telles que le sommet UE-États-Unis du 26 mars 2014. La Commission a salué les remarques du président Obama et la directive présidentielle du 17 janvier 2014 concernant la révision des programmes de renseignements américains et se réjouit de l'achèvement du processus de réforme américain en cours, dont le résultat sera examiné avec la plus grande attention.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004622/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Snowden: surveillance of NGOs

The latest series of revelations by Edward Snowden seem to suggest that human rights defenders, including staff at Amnesty International, have very probably been targets of surveillance by US and British intelligence agencies.

The whistle-blower and former US intelligence agency consultant, who is now living in exile in Moscow, spoke at a video conference with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) held in Strasbourg on the afternoon of Tuesday, 8 April 2014.

When asked if the US National Security Agency (NSA) or its British counterpart, the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), were actively spying on human rights organisations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, he confirmed that there was no doubt that 'the NSA has specifically targeted either leaders or staff members in a number of civil and non-governmental organisations'.

If these allegations are true, they would confirm our worst fears. The full extent of these surveillance operations must now be disclosed and details revealed of the robust legal safeguards introduced to prevent such unfocused operations from being carried out again.

1. What is the Commission's stance on the issue?

2. Will it urge the authorities involved in this potential scandal to respond to theseallegations?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission has expressed repeatedly its very serious concerns about the allegations concerning US surveillance activities made public by Mr Snowden, and has raised these issues with the US authorities at all the levels, including in the framework of an *ad-hoc* EU-US working group on data protection and at the occasion of high level meetings such as the recent EU-US Summit on 26 March 2014. The Commission welcomed President Obama's remarks and presidential directive of 17 January 2014 on the review of US intelligence programmes and is looking forward to the completion of the US on-going reform process, the outcome of which will be examined with utmost attention.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004623/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Droits humains en Russie

Mardi 8 avril, le tribunal municipal de Saint-Pétersbourg a débouté une importante organisation non gouvernementale (ONG) russe de son appel d'un jugement antérieur la contraignant à s'inscrire sur le registre des «agents de l'étranger». Cette décision constitue une attaque judiciaire contre la totalité de la société civile en Russie, a déclaré Amnesty International.

Le Centre antidiscrimination Memorial (ADC Memorial), qui défend les droits humains des victimes du racisme et de la xénophobie en Russie, a décidé de mettre fin à ses activités en Russie plutôt que d'être étiqueté comme «agent de l'étranger» ou de risquer de voir sa directrice poursuivie pour défaut d'inscription.

Le tribunal avait le choix entre deux solutions, et n'a pas opté pour la justice et les droits humains. La décision affligeante qu'il a prise correspond à la tendance dominante promue par le gouvernement russe, qui entend marquer de son sceau toutes les activités de la société civile. Ce jugement crée un précédent dangereux qui pourrait être utilisé contre d'autres ONG.

1. Ne s'agit-il pas là d'une violation des Droits de l'homme?

2. Quelle est la position de la Commission à ce sujet?

3. Les autorités russes, en s'en prenant à quiconque ose les critiquer, ne privent-elles pas délibérément la société russe de toute parole différente, du contrepoids nécessaire aux actions du gouvernement?

4. Que compte faire la Commission?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2014)

À plusieurs reprises, la haute représentante/vice-présidente a fait part de ses vives préoccupations à l'égard de l'adoption par la Douma russe de plusieurs lois ayant un effet paralysant sur la société civile et limitant les Droits de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales. La décision judiciaire exigeant l'inscription d'ADC Memorial en tant qu'«agent de l'étranger» est source de préoccupation pour l'Union européenne. De façon regrettable, celle-ci a coïncidé avec la décision de la cour constitutionnelle russe de reconnaître la constitutionnalité de la loi concernant les «agents de l'étranger».

Le fait que le procureur se soit référé pour preuve à un rapport sur les «Roms, migrants, activistes et victimes d'abus policiers» soumis par cette ONG au Comité des Nations unies contre la torture en novembre 2012 est une source de préoccupation supplémentaire et constitue une violation des obligations internationales russes de garantir que les groupes ainsi que les individus peuvent communiquer librement avec des organes des Nations unies sans risque de poursuites judiciaires. Alors que la rhétorique hostile aux migrants et les attaques à caractère xénophobe demeurent des aspects très importants de la problématique des Droits de l'homme en Russie, le harcèlement d'ADC Memorial va à l'encontre des efforts que la Russie affirme avoir accomplis pour limiter ces tendances inquiétantes au sein de la société russe.

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est consciente de la pression croissante que les autorités russes exercent sur la société civile, les défenseurs des Droits de l'homme et les ONG. Elle continuera à inviter la Russie à respecter ses obligations internationales et à tenir compte de l'avis pertinent des organismes et des mécanismes internationaux de défense des Droits de l'homme.

L'UE continuera à suivre de très près l'évolution des Droits de l'homme en Russie, notamment par l'intermédiaire de sa délégation, et à aborder ces questions avec la Russie dans toutes les enceintes appropriées. Elle continuera également à soutenir la société civile au sein de la Fédération de Russie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004623/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Human rights in Russia

On Tuesday, 8 April 2014, the St Petersburg Municipal Court overturned an appeal by a major Russian NGO against an earlier judgment requiring it to register as a 'foreign agent'. This ruling constitutes a judicial attack on the whole of civil society in Russia, according to Amnesty International.

The Anti-Discrimination Centre 'Memorial', which defends the human rights of the victims of racism and xenophobia in Russia, decided to halt its operations in Russia rather than be labelled as a 'foreign agent' or risk its director being prosecuted for failure to register.

The court had the choice of two solutions, and did not opt for justice and human rights. The disturbing decision it took reflects the dominant trend promoted by the Russian government, which intends to place its stamp on all civil society activities. This judgment creates a dangerous precedent and could be used against other NGOs.

1. Is this not a violation of human rights?

2. What is the Commission's position on this matter?

3. Are not the Russian authorities, in attacking anyone who dares to criticise them, deliberately depriving Russian society of any dissenting voices, and of the essential counter-weight to government actions?

4. What action does the Commission propose to take?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The HR/VP has repeatedly expressed her deep concern over the adoption by the Russian Duma of several laws having a chilling effect on civil society, curtailing human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Court ruling requiring ADC Memorial to register as a 'Foreign Agent', is a source of concern for the European Union. Regrettably, it also coincided with Russia's Constitutional Court decision to recognise the constitutionality of the law on'foreign agents'.

The fact that the Prosecutor referred as evidence to a report on 'Roma, Migrants, Activists, victims of police abuse', submitted by that NGO to the UN Committee against Torture in November 2012, is an additional source of concern. It breaches Russia's international obligations to ensure that both individuals and groups can freely communicate with United Nations bodies without fear of prosecution. Whereas anti-migrant rhetoric and xenophobic attacks remain a very relevant human right issue in Russia, the harassment of ADC Memorial goes contrary to Russia's stated efforts to curb those worrying trends within the Russian society.

The HR/VP is aware of the increased pressure exerted by Russian authorities on Civil Society, Human Rights Defenders and NGOs. The HR/VP will continue to call on Russia to abide by its international obligations and to take into account the relevant opinion of international human rights bodies and mechanisms.

The EU will continue to closely monitor human rights developments in Russia notably through the work of the EU Delegation and will continue to raise the issue with Russia in all appropriate fora. It will also continue to support civil society in the Russian Federation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004624/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Aide publique au développement

La Commission a exhorté mardi les 28 États membres de l'Union européenne à tenir leurs engagements en matière d'aide publique au développement (APD), pour appuyer la réalisation des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement (OMD). Elle a lancé cet appel à la suite de la publication dans la même journée, par l'Organisation de coopération et de développement économique (OCDE), des chiffres sur l'APD en 2013.

L'APD collective des institutions de l'Union et des 28 États membres a repris une tendance positive l'année dernière pour passer à 56,3 milliards d'euros, contre 55,3 milliards d'euros un an plus tôt, et ce après deux années de baisse successives. Elle s'est maintenue au niveau de 0,43 % du revenu national brut (RNB) de l'Union.

En 2005, les États membres se sont engagés à augmenter l'APD à 0,7 % du RNB de l'Union en 2015.

Selon l'OCDE, dix États membres de l'Union ont augmenté leur niveau APD/RNB l'année dernière et huit l'ont maintenu, alors que dix autres ont réduit leurs efforts. Le Royaume-Uni a pour la première fois rejoint le Danemark, le Luxembourg et la Suède pour dépasser le seuil de 0,7 % correspondant à la part APD/RNB. Le Luxembourg et la Suède ont même accompli 1 % en 2013.

Les données publiées mardi sont fondées sur des informations préliminaires communiquées par les États membres de l'Union à l'OCDE et à la Commission.

D'après la Commission, quel chemin l'Union doit-elle encore parcourir pour atteindre son engagement collectif?

Quels sont les États qui rechignent à la tâche?

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2014)

Après deux années caractérisées par une baisse des volumes, l'aide au développement de l'UE a retrouvé une tendance positive en 2013 ([1]). Par conséquent, l'UE reste le premier donneur mondial d'aide publique au développement (APD), représentant plus de la moitié du total de l'APD apportée aux pays en développement selon les chiffres transmis au CAD de l'OCDE. Cela reflète les performances variables des États membres. En termes relatifs, le rapport aide/revenu national brut (RNB) a augmenté pour dix États membres ([2]), a baissé pour dix d'entre eux ([3]) et est resté constant pour huit autres ([4]). Quatre États membres — dont, pour la première fois, le Royaume-Uni — affichent un rapport APD/RNB supérieur à 0,7 % [5]. D'après les estimations des États membres et de la Commission, si la plupart des États membres n'accroissent pas substantiellement leurs efforts pour tenir leurs engagements individuels, l'APD collective de l'UE n'augmenterait que jusqu'à hauteur de 0,45 % du RNB à l'horizon 2015.

La Commission table sur la confirmation, donnée par l'ensemble des chefs d'État et de gouvernement de l'UE lors de la réunion du Conseil européen de février 2013, qu'il est prévu d'atteindre les objectifs en matière d'aide d'ici 2015. Sachant que l'objectif collectif est basé sur des engagements individuels des États membres, sa réalisation dépend des décisions budgétaires individuelles de chacun d'entre eux. La Commission espère que les conditions économiques difficiles permettront aux États membres de tenir parole. Elle continuera de les inviter à respecter leurs engagements et de suivre les progrès au moyen du rapport annuel sur la responsabilité de l'UE en matière de financement du développement.

Les propositions de la Commission visant à augmenter le budget de l'UE et du Fonds européen de développement pour la période 2014-2020 auraient permis de se rapprocher de l'objectif. Toutefois, des montants largement inférieurs ont été adoptés pour le cadre financier pluriannuel 2014-2020 de l'UE, ce qui signifie que les États membres devront combler l'écart qui en résultera à partir de leur budget national afin de respecter leur contribution à l'engagement qui a été pris.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-263_en.htm
([2]) SE, DK, UK, FI, DE, IT, EE, PL, BG, HR.
([3]) NL, BE, IE, FR, PT, MT, LT, CY, CZ, RO.
([4]) LU, AT, ES, EL, SI, HU, SK, LV.
([5]) SE, LU, DK, UK.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004624/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Official Development Assistance

The Commission recently called on the 28 EU Member States to fulfil their Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments in an effort to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are met. It launched this appeal immediately after the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had published ODA figures for 2013.

Aggregate ODA for all the EU institutions and Member States increased last year to EUR 56.3 billion, up from EUR 55.3 billion in 2012, after falling in the two years prior to that. Between 2012 and 2013 ODA remained steady at 0.43% of EU GDP.

In 2005, the Member States undertook to increase ODA to 0.7% of EU GDP by 2015.

According to the OECD, the ODA/GDP ratio increased in 10 Member States last year, stayed the same in eight, and fell in the remaining 10. The UK exceeded the 0.7% threshold for the first time, joining Denmark, Luxembourg and Switzerland in that elite group. The latter two countries actually achieved a ratio of 1% in 2013.

The data published are based on preliminary figures supplied by the EU Member States to the OECD and the Commission.

In the Commission's view, what further steps should the EU take to honour its collective undertaking regarding ODA?

Which Member States are not pulling their weight?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

After two years of falling volumes, EU development aid resumed its positive trend in 2013 ([1]). As a result, the EU remained the largest global Official Development Assistance (ODA) donor, accounting for over half of the total ODA to developing countries as reported to the OECD/DAC. This reflects a mixed performance by Member States. In relative terms, ten MS increased their aid/Gross National Income (GNI) ratio ([2]), ten decreased ([3]) and eight remained constant ([4]). Four Member States — including, for the first time, the UK — exceeded the 0.7% ODA/GNI mark ([5]). Member States' own and Commission estimates show that without substantial additional efforts by most Member States to fulfil their individual commitments, the EU's collective ODA would only increase to 0.45% of GNI by 2015.

The Commission relies on the confirmation by all EU Heads of State and Government at the February 2013 European Council meeting that they plan to achieve their aid targets by 2015. As the collective target is based on individual commitments by Member States, reaching it depends on the individual budgetary decisions of all Member States. The Commission hopes that the difficult economic circumstances will nevertheless allow Member States to stand by their words. The Commission will continue to call on all Member States to respect their commitments and to monitor progress through the annual EU Accountability report on Financing for Development.

The Commission's proposals for an increased EU budget and European Development Fund for the period 2014-2020 would have contributed to getting closer to the target. However, substantially lower amounts were agreed for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020. This means that the Member States will have to fill the resulting gap from their national budgets in order to fulfil their share of the commitment.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-263_en.htm
([2]) SE, DK, UK, FI, DE, IT, EE, PL, BG, HR.
([3]) NL, BE, IE, FR, PT, MT, LT, CY, CZ, RO.
([4]) LU, AT, ES, EL, SI, HU, SK, LV.
([5]) SE, LU, DK, UK.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004625/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Financement à long terme

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle favoriser l'adoption de méthodes nouvelles et différentes pour libérer le financement à long terme?

Quelle serait l'articulation de cet objectif avec l'entrée en vigueur de réglementations prudentielles plus restrictives, comme Solvabilité 2, tandis que la réhabilitation de la titrisation, à l'origine de la crise des subprimes de 2007-2008, n'est pas sans générer quelques inquiétudes?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(12 juin 2014)

Le 26 février 2014, le Parlement européen a adopté une résolution sur le financement à long terme de l'économie européenne.

Le 27 mars 2014, la Commission a publié une communication sur le financement à long terme de l'économie européenne ([1]). Ce document est la suite donnée à la consultation publique lancée un an plus tôt, au moment de la publication du Livre vert sur le même sujet.

La communication inclut une série complète d'actions cohérentes visant à :

— mobiliser des sources privées de financement à long terme;

— faire un meilleur usage des finances publiques;

— développer les marchés de capitaux;

— améliorer l'accès des PME au financement;

— attirer les financements privés vers les infrastructures, et à

— améliorer le climat général pour favoriser le financement durable.

En outre, au moment de mettre en œuvre une réglementation prudentielle, la Commission tiendra compte de son interaction avec les financements à long terme. Dans les actes délégués de Solvabilité 2, la Commission compte inclure un certain nombre d'incitations susceptibles de stimuler l'investissement à long terme de la part des assureurs.

Dans la période précédant la crise, tous les produits de titrisation étaient traités de la même façon, indépendamment de leur structure et de leur qualité. Étant donné l'importance que la titrisation simple et de grande qualité peut jouer dans le rétablissement de l'activité de prêt à l'économie, la Commission étudiera les traitements réglementaires qui devraient permettre une distinction appropriée de la titrisation de haute qualité, par exemple pour les prêts aux PME.

([1]) COM(2014)168.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004625/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Long-term financing for the economy

How does the Commission plan to encourage the introduction of new and different methods of generating long-term financing for the economy?

How can this goal be reconciled with the entry into force of more stringent prudential rules, such as Solvency II, at a time when the moves to rehabilitate securitisation, the practice which led to the subprime crisis in 2007-2008, are a real cause for concern?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

On 26 February 2014, the European Parliament voted a resolution on long-term financing of the European economy.

On 27 March 2014, the Commission published a communication on long term financing of the European economy ([1]). This document is the follow-up to the public consultation launched with the publication of the Green Paper on the same subject one year earlier.

The communication includes a comprehensive series of consistent actions on

— mobilising private sources of long-term financing,

— making better use of public finance,

— developing capital markets,

— improving SMEs' access to financing,

— attracting private finance to infrastructure, and

— enhancing the overall environment for sustainable finance.

Moreover, in implementing prudential regulation, the Commission will take into account of its interaction with long-term financing. In the delegated acts for Solvency II, the Commission intends to include a number of incentives to stimulate long-term investment by insurers.

In the run-up to the crisis all securitisation products were treated the same, irrespective of their structure and quality. Given the importance that simple and high quality securitisation can play in restoring lending to the economy, the Commission will explore regulatory treatments that should allow proper distinction of high quality securitisation, for instance for SME lending.

([1]) COM(2014) 168.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004626/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Travail non déclaré

Le 9 avril dernier, la Commission a proposé, à la suite de l'adoption de notre résolution, la création d'une plateforme à l'échelle des 28 États membres pour prévenir et décourager le travail non déclaré de manière plus efficace.

Que propose la Commission?

Quels sont les derniers chiffres et statistiques en la matière pour l'Europe d'une part et par pays d'autre part?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2014)

1. La plateforme européenne proposée par la Commission le 9 avril 2014 ([1]) a pour objectif de renforcer, à l'échelle de l'Union européenne (UE), la coopération entre les États membres en vue de combattre plus efficacement le travail non déclaré. Elle réunira des autorités nationales chargées de faire appliquer la législation, telles que l'inspection du travail, les autorités compétentes en matière de sécurité sociale, de fiscalité et de migration, et elle contribuera à une meilleure application du droit de l'UE et de la législation nationale et à la création d'emplois dans l'économie formelle. Elle visera à promouvoir la qualité des conditions de travail, l'insertion sur le marché du travail et l'inclusion sociale, à améliorer la coopération entre les autorités compétentes chargées de faire appliquer la législation dans les États membres, à accroître leur capacité technique, à traiter les aspects transfrontières du travail non déclaré et à sensibiliser l'opinion publique à la nécessité d'une action urgente de lutte contre ce phénomène. Afin d'atteindre ces objectifs, la plateforme échangera des bonnes pratiques et des informations, développera une expertise, effectuera des analyses et coordonnera les actions opérationnelles transfrontières.

2. Le rapport de la dernière enquête Eurobaromètre sur le travail non déclaré ([2]) montre que 4 % des personnes interrogées ont eu un travail non déclaré et qu'une sur dix a acheté des biens ou des services à une source qu'elle avait de bonnes raisons de croire impliquée dans le travail non déclaré. Les rapports «Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2013» ([3]) (l'emploi et la situation sociale en Europe en 2013) et «Tax Reforms in EU Member States 2013» ([4]) (les réformes fiscales dans les États membres de l'UE en 2013) contiennent davantage d'informations, notamment en ce qui concerne les différents États membres.

([1]) Proposition de décision du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant une plateforme européenne dans l'objectif de renforcer la coopération visant à prévenir et à décourager le travail non déclaré [COM(2014) 221 final du 9 avril 2014].

([2]) Eurobaromètre spécial 402 «Undeclared work in the European Union» (le travail non déclaré dans l'Union européenne), à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_402_en.pdf

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=fr&pubId=7684.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_papers/taxation_paper_38.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004626/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Undeclared work

On 9 April 2014, after Parliament had adopted its resolution on the subject, the Commission proposed the establishment of a platform involving all 28 Member States with a view to preventing and discouraging undeclared work more effectively.

What exactly is the Commission proposing?

What are the latest statistics on undeclared work for the EU as a whole and for each Member State?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

1. The aim of the European Platform proposed by the Commission on 9 April 2014 ([1]) is to improve cooperation at EU level between the Member States in tackling undeclared work more effectively. It will bring together Member State enforcement bodies, such as the labour inspectorates and the social security, tax and migration authorities, and will contribute to better enforcement of EU and national law and to the creation of formal jobs. It will promote quality working conditions, integration into the labour market and social inclusion. It aims to improve cooperation between the Member States' enforcement authorities, increase their technical capacity to tackle cross-border aspects of undeclared work and raise public awareness of the urgent need for action to tackle the phenomenon. To achieve those objectives, the Platform will exchange best practice and information, develop expertise and analysis and coordinate cross-border operational actions.

2. The latest Eurobarometer survey report on undeclared work ([2]) shows that 4% of the respondents had performed undeclared work and that one in 10 had purchased goods or services from a source which they had good reason to believe involved undeclared work. The Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2013 report ([3]) and the Tax Reforms in EU Member States 2013 report ([4]) give more information, in particular regarding the various Member States.

([1]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).
([2]) Special Eurobarometer 402 'Undeclared work in the European Union', at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_402_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7684
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_papers/taxation_paper_38.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004627/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Failles dans le soutien à l'emploi des jeunes

Face au chômage endémique chez les jeunes européens, des voix s'élèvent pour dénoncer le projet de garantie pour la jeunesse, qui englobe plusieurs dispositifs pour l'emploi. Le dispositif, actuellement mis en œuvre dans l'Union européenne, se propose de garantir soit un stage, soit une formation, soit un emploi pour tout jeune de moins de 25 ans, et ce dans les quatre mois.

1. Que répond la Commission à ceux qui disent qu'il s'agit d'un boulevard pour les pratiques abusives, notamment parce que la garantie ne met pas un terme aux stages non rémunérés, et que les jeunes devraient avoir le droit à une rémunération décente?

2. Selon le Forum européen de la jeunesse, une autre source d'inquiétude est le travail au noir: environ 10 % des jeunes de moins de 25 ans travaillent sans contrat au sein de l'Union. Quelque 30 % des jeunes sont proches du seuil du risque de pauvreté dans certains pays, comme en Allemagne, en Grèce, ou encore au Royaume-Uni. Ils risquent de basculer dans la misère, car ils reçoivent un salaire en dessous du seuil minimal. La Commission confirme-t-elle ces chiffres? Quelle est sa réaction?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2014)

La recommandation du Conseil sur l'établissement d'une garantie pour la jeunesse ([1]) précise que cette garantie (emploi, formation continue, apprentissage ou stage) doit être de bonne qualité; ce dispositif ne devrait donc pas aboutir à l'exploitation des jeunes.

En ce qui concerne les stages, en particulier, la recommandation du Conseil sur un cadre de qualité pour les stages ([2]) propose des lignes directrices permettant de garantir un contenu d'apprentissage de qualité et des conditions de travail équitables, de sorte que les stages facilitent le passage du système éducatif au monde du travail. Le cadre de qualité pour les stages ne recommande pas que tous les stages soient rémunérés, mais il prévoit que la convention de stage écrite précise si une rémunération est due au stagiaire et quelles sont la couverture sociale et les perspectives d'embauche. Cela doit permettre aux candidats stagiaires de disposer de toutes les informations nécessaires sur les conditions du stage au moment d'introduire leur demande.

La Commission reconnaît que les jeunes sont particulièrement vulnérables lorsqu'il s'agit de travail non déclaré. Le dernier rapport Eurobaromètre ([3]) sur le travail non déclaré a montré que les jeunes (de 15 à 24 ans) ont tendance à être davantage concernés (7 %) que les personnes âgées de 5 ans et plus (1 %) par le travail non déclaré.

La plateforme européenne proposée par la Commission le 9 avril 2014 ([4]) contribuera notamment à améliorer l'application de la législation de l'UE et du droit national et à la création d'emplois dans l'économie formelle.

Le pourcentage de jeunes de l'UE menacés par la pauvreté ou l'exclusion sociale s'élevait en 2012 à 29,7 % pour les 15-29 ans et à 31,4 % pour les 15-24 ans. Dans certains pays, ce pourcentage dépasse largement les 40 % pour les 15-29 ans: 48,7 % en Bulgarie, 44,5 % en Grèce et 45,2 % en Roumanie. Il est actuellement de 24,3 % en France, de 25,4 % en Allemagne et de 29,6 % au Royaume-Uni ([5]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:FR:PDF
([2]) http://www.consilium.europhttp://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/fr/lsa/141425.pdfa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/141424.pdf
([3]) Eurobaromètre spécial 402 «Undeclared Work in the European Union» (Le travail non déclaré dans l'Union européenne): http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_402_en.pdf
([4]) Proposition de décision du Parlement européen et du Conseil établissant une plateforme européenne dans l'objectif de renforcer la coopération visant à prévenir et à décourager le travail non déclaré [COM(2014) 221 final du 9 avril 2014].
([5]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=yth_incl_010&lang=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004627/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Flaws in the Youth Guarantee Scheme

With youth unemployment now endemic, people are starting to criticise the Youth Guarantee Scheme, which incorporates a number of job-creation measures. The scheme was introduced with the aim of guaranteeing all young persons under the age of 25 a job, an internship or a training placement within four months.

1. What is the Commission's response to those who claim that the Youth Guarantee Scheme is throwing the door wide open to exploitative practices, in particular by not putting a stop to unpaid internships, and that young people are entitled to a decent wage?

2. According to the European Youth Forum, undeclared employment is another cause for concern: roughly 10% of persons under the age of 25 in the EU are working without a contract. In several countries, including Germany, Greece and the UK, some 30% of all young people are living just above the poverty line. They face destitution because they are being paid less than the minimum wage. Can the Commission confirm that these figures are correct? What does it have to say about them?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee ([1]) specifies that the Youth Guarantee offer (employment, continued education, apprenticeship, traineeships) has to be of good quality; thus such an offer should not lead to the exploitation of young people.

As regards traineeships in particular, the Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships ([2]) (QFT) proposes guidelines to provide a high quality learning content and fair working conditions so that traineeships efficiently support education-to-work transitions. The QFT does not recommend that all traineeships should be paid, but it provides that the written traineeships agreement should clarify whether remunerations are applicable as well as social security coverage and hiring chances. This will allow trainee candidates to have all necessary information about traineeship conditions already at the time of the application.

The Commission agrees that young people are especially vulnerable when it comes to undeclared work. The latest Eurobarometer ([3]) report on undeclared work showed that younger persons (aged 15-24) tend to be more involved (7%) than those aged 55+ (1%) in undeclared work.

The European Platform proposed by the Commission on 9 April 2014 ([4]) will contribute *inter alia* to better enforcement of EU and national law and to the creation of formal jobs.

The percentage of young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion for 2012 for the 15-29 years old is at EU level at 29.7%; for the 15-24 years old it is at 31.4%. For individual countries, the percentage for the 15-29 years old goes well beyond 40%: BG 48.7%, EL 44.5%, RO 45.2%. France has currently a rate of 24.3%, Germany 25.4% and the UK 29.6% ([5]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/141424.pdf
([3]) Special Eurobarometer 402 'Undeclared work in the European Union' http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_402_en.pdf
([4]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).
([5]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=yth_incl_010&lang=en

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004628/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Plainte GAIA

L'organisation de défense des animaux GAIA a porté plainte auprès du médiateur européen et a interpellé la Commission européenne, car elle estime que l'Agence européenne des produits chimiques (ECHA) ne respecte pas la directive «REACH». Cette directive, qui encadre l'utilisation des substances chimiques, stipule que certains tests sur les animaux ne sont permis qu'en dernier recours.

Concrètement, lorsqu'une entreprise prévoit de tester une substance chimique sur des animaux vertébrés dans le cadre de la directive REACH, elle doit d'abord soumettre une proposition d'essai à l'ECHA et obtenir l'accord de cette dernière. Durant la procédure, des tiers ont la possibilité d'apporter des informations permettant à l'entreprise d'éviter de conduire l'expérience envisagée.

GAIA estime que l'ECHÀ manque à son devoir, car elle n'évalue pas systématiquement la pertinence des tests sur animaux. «Nous avons été fortement surpris de découvrir que des tests sur animaux avaient pu être évités pour la seule raison que les entreprises avaient retiré leur proposition, et non pas suite à une décision de l'ECHA de ne pas autoriser les tests», commente ainsi Ann De Greef, directrice de GAIA. En outre, «l'ECHA empêche le bon fonctionnement du système en publiant un grand nombre de propositions à la fois, ce qui nous empêche de les commenter, et fait part de nos commentaires aux entreprises en tout dernier lieu», se désole-t-elle.

1. Comment la Commission réagit-elle face à la plainte de GAIA?

2. L'ECHÀ manque-t-elle à son devoir? Est-il vrai qu'elle n'évalue pas systématiquement la pertinence des tests sur animaux?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(18 juin 2014)

La Commission ne commente pas les plaintes qui sont en cours de traitement par le Médiateur européen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004628/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Complaint by GAIA

The animal rights organisation GAIA has lodged a complaint with the European Ombudsman and contacted the Commission, as it considers the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is not complying with the REACH Directive. This directive, which regulates the use of chemicals, stipulates that certain tests on animals are only permitted as a last resort.

Specifically, under the REACH Directive, when a company plans to test a chemical on vertebrates it must first submit a testing proposal to the ECHA and obtain the latter's agreement. During the procedure, third parties are able to supply information enabling the company to avoid carrying out the experiment planned.

GAIA considers that the ECHA is failing in its duty, as it does not systematically assess the relevance of the tests on animals. Ann De Greef, one of GAIA's Directors, remarked that, 'We were extremely surprised to discover that tests on animals were avoided simply because the companies had withdrawn their proposal, and not as a consequence of a decision by the ECHA not to authorise the tests'. Furthermore she regrets that, 'by publishing a large number of proposals all at once the ECHA prevents the system from running smoothly. This prevents us from commenting on them and then informing the companies of our views'.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to GAIA's complaint?

2. Is the ECHA failing in its duty? Is it true that it does not systematically assess the relevance of tests on animals?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

The Commission does not comment on complaints that are still being dealt with by the European Ombudsman.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004629/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Syndicats aériens et concurrence déloyale

Les syndicats du transport aérien ont décidé de tirer le signal d'alarme. Motif de leur inquiétude: la situation financière — toujours préoccupante — du groupe Air France-KLM, en pleine restructuration, et la montée en puissance inexorable des compagnies à bas coûts.

Trop de charges et trop de taxes, mais aussi trop de différences entre les politiques fiscales des États membres de l'Union européenne, dénoncent les syndicats. «Dans une industrie où la marge moyenne est de 3 % sur la longue durée, un écart faible de charges ou de taxes suffit à faire la différence entre une compagnie française et ses concurrentes localisées en Irlande ou en Angleterre», déplorent les syndicats. Pour ces syndicats, l'un des principaux responsables de tous ces maux, c'est l'Europe. Ils pointent du doigt «la passivité de la Commission».

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Peut-on penser que les décisions à prendre auraient pour conséquence de permettre aux entreprises déviantes d'employer jusqu'à 80 % de leurs pilotes sans aucune charge sociale ni fiscalité par le simple jeu des «pilots contracts» situés à la limite de l'Europe, dans l'île de Man ou les îles Anglo-Normandes?

3. Ne s'agirait-il pas là de «paradis sociaux» contre lesquels nos compagnies ne pourraient lutter?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

La Commission ne peut agir que dans les limites de ses compétences. L'UE n'est pas compétente pour les cas particuliers de fraude à la sécurité sociale et d'évasion fiscale présumées. Il appartient aux États membres d'appliquer leur législation nationale ([1]).

Dans le domaine de la sécurité sociale, les règles de l'UE ne font que coordonner les systèmes nationaux de façon à ce que les citoyens européens qui se déplacent entre les États membres, tels que les travailleurs transfrontaliers, ne perdent pas leur protection sociale. Les règles concernant la détermination d'une législation applicable en matière de sécurité sociale pour les équipages de conduite (c'est-à-dire le principe de la base d'affectation), intégrées dans le règlement (CE) nº 883/2004 par le règlement (UE) nº 465/2004, ([2]) sont également intégralement applicables aux équipages de conduite employés par des agences de travail intérimaire.

Les États membres de l'UE disposent d'une grande liberté pour élaborer leurs systèmes fiscaux et définir les niveaux d'imposition de la manière la plus adéquate pour atteindre leurs objectifs nationaux même si, dans l'exercice de leurs pouvoirs d'imposition, ils sont tenus de respecter les obligations qui leur incombent en vertu des traités de l'UE. Si la Commission peut proposer une législation pour améliorer le fonctionnement du marché intérieur, les propositions ne peuvent devenir des lois que si les États membres de l'UE les approuvent de façon unanime. Le traitement fiscal du personnel aérien est le plus souvent régi par des conventions bilatérales concernant la double imposition entre les États membres concernés. Par exemple, en vertu de telles conventions fiscales, les droits d'imposition peuvent être attribués au pays où se trouve le centre de gestion effectif de la compagnie aérienne, ou au pays de résidence des personnels, ou encore aux deux.

([1]) Voir: E013663/2013 — http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-013663&language=EN

([2]) Règlement (UE) nº 465/2012 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 22 mai 2012 modifiant le règlement (CE) nº 883/2004 portant sur la coordination des systèmes de sécurité sociale et le règlement (CE) nº 987/2009 fixant les modalités d'application du règlement (CE) nº 883/2004 (Texte présentant de l'intérêt pour l'EEE et pour la Suisse). JO L 149 du 8.6.2012, p. 4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004629/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Airline unions and unfair competition

The air transport unions have decided to sound the alarm. They are concerned at the still worrying financial situation of the Air France/KLM group, which is busy restructuring, while the low-cost airlines are inexorably gaining in power.

The unions complain not just of too many charges and taxes, but also of too many differences between the EU Member States' tax policies. In an industry where the average long-term margin is 3%, they claim, a small divergence in charges or taxes can make the difference between a French airline and its competitors located in Ireland or the UK. The unions consider that Europe is among those most to blame for this situation, and accuse the Commission of 'passivity'.

1. What is the Commission's response to these charges?

2. Might it be that the decisions it calls for would result in non-compliant airlines employing up to 80% of their pilots without paying any social contributions or taxes, by the simple expedient of 'pilot contracts' based on the fringes of Europe, on the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands?

3. Are these not 'social security havens' which our airlines have no way of combating?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission can act only within the boundaries of its competence. The EU does not have competence to act in relation to individual cases of alleged social security and tax avoidance. It is for Member States to apply their national law ([1]).

In the field of social security, EU rules only coordinate national systems so that EU citizens moving between Member States, such as cross-border workers, do not lose their social security protection. The rules on the determination of applicable social security legislation for flight crew (i.e. the home base principle), incorporated into the regulation (EC) No 883/2004 by the regulation (EU) No 465/2012 ([2]), are fully applicable also to flight crew employed through temporary employment agencies.

Member States have a broad freedom to design their tax systems and set taxation levels in the most appropriate way to meet their domestic policy objectives, although, in the exercise of their taxation rights, they must respect their obligations under the EU Treaties. While the Commission can make proposals for legislation to improve the functioning of the internal market, the proposals will only become law if EU Member States unanimously agree to them. The tax treatment of airline workers will usually be governed by bilateral double taxation treaties between the Member States concerned. For example, under such tax treaties the taxing rights may be allocated to the country where the airline company has its effective place of management or to the country of residence of the crews or to both.

([1]) See E013663/2013 — http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-013663&language=EN

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 465/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22.5.2012 amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 (Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland). OJ L 149, 8.6.2012, p.4.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004630/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: L'emploi à domicile gravement menacé

L'emploi à domicile a enregistré en 2013 une chute comme il n'en a pas connue depuis dix ans.

Tous les indicateurs sont au rouge:

— Le nombre de particuliers déclarant un emploi à domicile (hors assistantes maternelles) a diminué de 3,2 % en un an. Il est repassé sous la barre symbolique des deux millions (1,99 million d'employeurs).

— Le nombre d'heures déclarées a chuté: en un an, le volume horaire déclaré a baissé de 6,1 % pour s'établir légèrement en-dessous de 130 millions d'heures.

— Par ailleurs, l'activité des assistantes maternelles, qui jusqu'à présent résistait plutôt bien, est retombée sous son niveau de la fin 2011. Le volume horaire déclaré a reculé de 1,9 % au dernier trimestre et de 1 % sur un an.

Au total, si on additionne l'emploi à domicile et le recours aux assistantes maternelles, ce sont plus de 70 000 particuliers employeurs qui se sont évaporés et environ 11,6 millions d'heures déclarées qui manquent: l'équivalent d'un «plan social» de 7 200 emplois à plein temps.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Possédait-elle des chiffres sur le sujet? Lesquels?

3. Que compte-t-elle faire pour encourager le secteur?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2014)

Les services aux personnes et aux ménages (PHS) sont souvent évoqués en tant que réponse possible à un meilleur équilibre entre vie professionnelle et vie privée ou à propos de création d'emplois.

L'OCDE ([1]) estime que, dans les États qui sont membres à la fois de l'Union européenne et de cette organisation, les membres adultes du ménage (souvent les femmes) accordent en moyenne 2,5 heures par jour aux travaux ménagers et aux services aux personnes, ce qui comprend des enfants et les soins aux personnes âgées.

Étant donné la hausse du taux d'emploi des femmes (de 51,2 % en 1997 à 58,2 % en 2010), ces dernières consacrent moins de temps à leur foyer, de sorte qu'il est nécessaire de repenser la prise en charge informelle des enfants et des personnes âgées, ainsi que des travaux ménagers.

Sans intervention de l'État, l'emploi formel dans les services aux personnes et aux ménages est relativement coûteux pour la majorité de la population et le marché formel de services de même nature est relativement limité. Une part importante des PHS est donc assurée de manière informelle par des travailleurs non déclarés ([2]).

Compte tenu de l'ampleur du travail non déclaré dans ce secteur, les pouvoirs publics peuvent envisager d'intervenir en vue de favoriser l'offre de PHS dans l'économie formelle. Cette intervention peut concerner les services aux personnes comme les services de travaux ménagers.

En avril 2012, la Commission a publié avec le train de mesures pour l'emploi un document de travail sur les services aux personnes et aux ménages ([3]) afin de sensibiliser les États membres à la nécessité d'officialiser les activités liées au secteur des services à domicile. À cette fin, la Commission s'emploie à collecter des données pour fournir des éléments de preuve aux États membres.

([1]) Panorama de la société 2011, les indicateurs sociaux de l'OCDE, pp. 12 & 22. OCDE.
([2]) La Commission a récemment présenté une proposition de décision du Parlement européen et du Conseil sur la mise en place d'une plate-forme européenne en vue de renforcer la coopération en matière de prévention et de dissuasion du travail non déclaré (COM(2014) 221 final du 9 avril 2014).
([3]) SWD(2012) 95 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004630/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: 'Homeworking'/teleworking under serious threat

In 2013, there was a drop in the number of 'homeworkers' on a scale not seen for 10 years.

All the indicators are downward:

— The number of individuals declaring employment as homeworkers (apart from childminders) fell by 3.2% in a year, bringing it back below the symbolic barrier of 2 million (1.9 million employers).

— The number of hours declared has dropped dramatically: in a year the volume of hours declared has fallen by 6.1%, and is now slightly under 130 million hours.

— Childminding work, which had been holding up quite well, has now fallen back below its level at the end of 2011. The volume of hours declared dropped by 1.9% in the last quarter and 1% year-on-year.

In total, combining homeworking and the employment of childminders, there is a shortfall of more than 700 000 individuals employing homeworkers and of some 11.6 million declared hours, the equivalent of a 'social plan' affecting 7 200 people in full-time jobs.

1. What is the Commission's response to this situation?

2. Does it have any figures? If so, what are they?

3. What does it propose to do to encourage work in this sector?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

Personal and household services (PHS) are often mentioned as a possible answer to better work -life balance and creation of job opportunities.

The OECD ([1]) estimates that in EU Member States (also members of the organisation) adult household members (often women) spend on average 2.5 hours per day on housework and care (childcare, elderly care and housework services).

The increase of the female employment rate (from 51.2% in 1997 to 58.2% in 2010) reduces the time spent at home, and induces a need to re-think informal household-based care for children and the elderly as well as housework.

Without public support, formal employment in PHS is quite costly for the majority of the population and the formal market for PHS is quite limited. Hence, a noticeable part of PHS is provided informally by undeclared workers ([2]).

Taking into account the importance of undeclared work in the PHS sectors, public authorities can consider intervening with the aim of encouraging the provision of PHS in the formal economy. This intervention can cover both care and housework activities.

The Commission issued as part of the Employment Package of April 2012 a staff working document on Personal and household services ([3]) in order to raise awareness among member states regarding the need to formalize work in this sector services at home. To this end, the Commission works on gathering data's to provide member states with evidence.

([1]) Society at a Glance 2011-OECD social indicators, pages 12 & 22. OECD.
([2]) The Commission recently put forward a proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).
([3]) SWD(2012) 95 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004631/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Restrictions d'exploitation liées au bruit dans les aéroports

Les restrictions d'exploitation liées au bruit dans les aéroports de l'Union européenne devraient continuer d'être fixées par les autorités régionales et nationales. Cependant, les personnes vivant à proximité devraient être mieux informées et les problèmes de santé relatifs aux nuisances sonores devraient être davantage pris en compte, grâce à un accord conclu entre le Parlement et le Conseil, adopté par la commission des transports ce jeudi 10 avril 2014. Le Parlement se prononcera sur l'accord lors de la session d'avril.

Les nouvelles dispositions qui régissent la prise de décisions relatives aux mesures d'atténuation du bruit émis par les avions rendraient le droit européen conforme aux principes de l'Organisation de l'aviation civile internationale. Selon ces règles, les restrictions d'exploitation liées au bruit dans les aéroports de l'Union continueraient d'être fixées par les autorités nationales et régionales.

1. La Commission nous rejoint-elle sur ce point de vue?

2. Quel est son argumentaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

L'efficacité et l'incidence des restrictions d'exploitation liées au bruit et des mesures d'atténuation du bruit dépendent généralement de la situation donnée d'un aéroport. Les décisions en la matière doivent être prises au moment où les niveaux de protection sonore souhaités sont déterminés et où les priorités pour la création d'emploi et le développement régional sont fixées. Dès lors, si les paramètres généraux ainsi que les questions liées au processus décisionnel sont déterminés au niveau européen, il est préférable que les mesures concrètes concernant un aéroport soient prises au niveau local ou national, tout en respectant les règles européennes.

C'est en effet l'élément fondamental du nouveau règlement sur le bruit dans les aéroports, qui prévoit que les décisions relatives aux restrictions d'exploitation liées aux nuisances sonores sont prises au niveau local, régional ou national, la Commission ayant un droit de regard de manière à veiller à ce que chaque étape de la procédure soit scrupuleusement suivie et à ce que les droits des personnes vivant à proximité des aéroports soient respectés. La Commission est d'avis que les nouvelles règles sont conformes aux principes de l'OACI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004631/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports

Noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports should continue to be set by regional and national authorities. However, local residents should be better informed, and greater account should be taken of health problems related to noise impact, thanks to an agreement between Parliament and the Council adopted by the Committee on Transport and Tourism on Thursday 10 April 2014. Parliament will vote on the agreement during the April part-session.

The new rules governing decision-making on aircraft noise reduction measures would bring European law into line with the principles of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Under those rules, noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports would continue to be set by national and regional authorities.

1. Does the Commission agree with us on this point?

2. On what arguments does it base its view?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The efficiency and the impact of noise-related operating restrictions and noise mitigating measures in general depend on the particular situation of the airport. Such decisions are best taken at the level where the choices on the desired noise protection levels are made and priorities for employment creation and regional development are set. For this reason, on the one hand general parameters as well as issues related to the decision-making process are decided at the European level; on the other hand, the concrete measures for an airport are best decided at the local or national level, with due respect for European rules.

This is indeed the essence of the new airport noise reguation whereby the decisions on noise-related operating restrictions are taken at the local, regional or national level, with a right of scrutiny for the Commission to ensure that all procedural steps have been followed and the rights of the citizens living in the vicinity of the airport have been respected. In the Commission's view the new rules are in line with the ICAO principles.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004632/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Problèmes de la réglementation relative à la production biologique

1. Dans la proposition de règlement plus strict du secteur biologique, comment la Commission justifie-t-elle l'interdiction des exploitations mixtes combinant production bio et conventionnelle?

2. Cette suppression ne va-t-elle pas fragiliser le développement des conversions à l'agriculture biologique et ralentir l'essor de l'agroécologie?

3. Concernant la fin des dérogations, les coopératives nous expliquent que cela reviendrait «à nier la diversité des situations des exploitations biologiques en Europe». La Commission partage-t-elle cette conclusion?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2014)

L'article 11 du règlement (CE) nº 834/2007 ([1]) prévoit qu'une exploitation biologique doit être entièrement exploitée sur la base des principes de l'agriculture biologique. Une dérogation limitée à cette règle peut être autorisée dans certains cas. En conséquence, certains agriculteurs biologiques gèrent l'ensemble de leur exploitation selon les règles régissant la production biologique et d'autres mènent une agriculture biologique et traditionnelle en parallèle. Cette situation suscite des préoccupations quant à une concurrence déloyale. En outre, les rapports d'audit révèlent qu'il est plus difficile de contrôler l'intégrité des produits biologiques dans des exploitations mixtes, et que cela implique des charges administratives plus lourdes et des frais d'inspection plus élevés. La Cour des comptes a recommandé à la Commission de remédier aux insuffisances en matière de contrôle. La Commission a donc proposé de supprimer cette dérogation.

La Commission n'estime pas que cette suppression puisse ralentir la conversion à la production biologique. Au contraire, l'analyse d'impact de la Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/documents/eu-policy/policy-development/impact-assessment/) montre que les obstacles au développement de la production biologique dans l'Union, comme le nombre élevé de dérogations, conduisent à ce que la demande croissante de produits biologiques soit satisfaite par des importations plutôt que par la production de l'Union. La proposition de la Commission vise à lever ces obstacles afin de contribuer au développement de la production biologique dans l'Union.

La Commission ne souscrit pas aux déclarations des Honorables Parlementaires. En effet, en raison des perspectives de marché positives dans le secteur de l'agriculture biologique, les exploitations agricoles pratiquant la production parallèle pourraient choisir de se convertir complètement à la production biologique, si une période de transition appropriée leur est accordée.

La proposition de la Commission sera examinée dans le cadre de la procédure législative ordinaire avec le Conseil et le Parlement européen.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n°834/2007 du Conseil relatif à la production biologique et à l'étiquetage des produits biologiques et abrogeant le règlement (CEE) n°2092/91 (JO L 189 du 20.07.2007, p. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004632/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Problems with regulations governing organic production

1. In its proposal for stricter regulation of the organic sector, how does the Commission justify its ban on mixed farms which combine organic and conventional production?

2. Will this not undermine efforts to convert to biological production and slow down the progress of environmentally friendly farming?

3. We are told by cooperatives that the end of these exemptions would be tantamount to 'denying the diversity of organic farming in Europe'. Does the Commission agree with this conclusion?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 ([1]) provides for an organic holding to be managed entirely organically. A limited exception to this rule may be authorised in certain cases. As a result, some organic farmers manage their entire farm according to organic rules and others carry out organic and conventional agriculture in parallel. This situation raises concerns regarding fair competition. Moreover, audit reports show that it is more difficult to control the integrity of organic products on mixed farms, and that it involves a heavier administrative burden and higher inspection fees. The Court of Auditors has recommended to the Commission to address control weaknesses. The Commission therefore proposed to remove this exception.

The Commission does not consider that this will slow down conversion to organic production. On the contrary, the Commission's impact assessment (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/documents/eu-policy/policy-development/impact-assessment/) shows that the obstacles to the development of organic production in the Union such as the large number of exceptions, result in the growing demand for organic products being met by imports rather than by EU production. The Commission's proposal addresses these obstacles to help organic production develop in the Union.

The Commission does not agree with the statement mentioned by the Honourable Members. Indeed, because of the positive market outlook in the organic sector, farms with parallel production could choose to fully convert to organic production, if an appropriate transition period is granted.

The Commission's proposal will be discussed during the ordinary legislative procedure with the Council and the European Parliament.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007, p. 1).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004633/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Air Madagascar

La Commission a effectué une nouvelle mise à jour de la liste noire des compagnies aériennes ce jeudi 10 avril. Pas de changement pour Air Madagascar, qui reste frappée d'une restriction d'exploitation.

Malgré les nombreuses délégations de la compagnie Air Madagascar qui se sont rendues à Bruxelles ces dernières semaines pour plaider sa cause, la Commission a décidé de la laisser figurer dans l'annexe B. Cela lui interdit tout vol vers l'Union si l'appareil est immatriculé à Madagascar.

1. Sur quoi se base la Commission pour prendre sa décision?

2. Quelles sont les recommandations de la Commission à Air Madagascar?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

La décision de laisser figurer le transporteur aérien Air Madagascar à l'annexe B a été prise sur la base de la situation décrite aux considérants 66 à 75 du règlement (UE) nº 368/2014 ([1]) et des critères communs fixés à l'annexe du règlement (CE) nº 2111/2005 ([2]).

Les deux recommandations principales de la Commission et du comité de la sécurité aérienne au transporteur Air Madagascar consistent dans un audit interne complet de la compagnie ainsi que dans la mise en œuvre intégrale du plan de mesures correctives défini par le transporteur aérien afin de répondre aux observations formulées à l'occasion de la mission européenne d'évaluation de la sécurité effectuée en février 2014.

L'annexe B du règlement (UE) nº 368/2014 établit la liste des appareils autorisés à voler à dans l'Union européenne. En ce qui concerne le transporteur Air Madagascar, tous les appareils de sa flotte peuvent être exploités dans l'Union européenne, à l'exception de deux appareils de type Airbus A-340.

([1]) JO L 108 du 11.4.2014, p. 17.
([2]) JO L 344 du 27.12.2005, p. 15.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004633/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Air Madagascar

On 10 April 2014 the Commission updated its blacklist of banned airlines. Air Madagascar's status has not changed and it is still subject to operational restrictions within the EU.

Air Madagascar delegations have spent the past few weeks in Brussels arguing the company's case, but the Commission has decided to maintain the restrictions. As a result, all Air Madagascar aircraft registered in Madagascar are prohibited from entering EU airspace.

1. On what basis has the Commission taken its decision?

2. What are the Commission's recommendations to Air Madagascar?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The decision to maintain the air carrier Air Madagascar in Annex B was made on the basis of the situation described in Recitals (66) to (75) of Regulation (EU) No 368/2014 ([1]) and the common criteria set out in the annex to Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 ([2]).

A full internal audit of the air carrier as well as the complete implementation of the corrective action plan set up by the air carrier to address the observations made during the EU safety assessment visit of February 2014 were the two main recommendations made by the Commission and the Air Safety Committee to the air carrier Air Madagascar.

Annex B of Regulation (EU) No 368/2014 lists the aircraft that are authorised to operate into the European Union. With respect to the air carrier Air Madagascar, all aircraft of its fleet are authorised to operate into the European Union with the exception of two aircraft of type Airbus A-340.

([1]) OJ L 108, 11.4.2014, p.17.
([2]) OJ L 344, 27.12.2005, p. 15.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004634/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Agrément VHU: le CNPA saisit la Commission

Depuis plusieurs mois, le dialogue entre les recycleurs du Conseil national des professions de l'automobile (CNPA) et le ministère de l'Environnement est infructueux, et ce malgré les dysfonctionnements constatés au quotidien dans la filière française des véhicules hors d'usage (VHU). Le syndicat de Suresnes fait notamment le constat de «nouvelles obligations règlementaires à la charge des centres VHU en dépit du bon sens» et regrette que «le Conseil d'État ait rejeté la requête du CNPA visant à annuler l'arrêté interministériel du 2 mai 2012 relatif aux agréments des exploitants des centres VHU».

En raison de ce statu quo, la Commission a incité le CNPA à la saisir officiellement sur le fond de ces problèmes liés aux véhicules hors d'usage. Dans son communiqué, le CNPA rappelle qu'il «ne peut accepter en effet l'empilement constant et s'élève notamment contre l'obligation d'imperméabiliser les aires d'entreposage des véhicules, une disposition extrêmement coûteuse et disproportionnée».

Trois points principaux sont au cœur du débat:

L'amalgame entre les véhicules hors d'usage et les véhicules en attente d'expertise: un cas de surtransposition injustifiée. L'imperméabilisation imposée par l'arrêté du 2 mai concerne les sols occupés par les véhicules hors d'usage mais aussi par les véhicules en attente d'expertise.

La nécessaire et urgente réaction pour endiguer le développement des chantiers sauvages. La situation empire: le pourcentage de véhicules hors d'usages passant par la filière légale a chuté de 73 % en 2010 à 57 % en 2012. Le CNPA demande un contrôle plus intensif sur le terrain des centres agréés VHU qui ne respectent pas leur cahier des charges, des dépôts (professionnels et particuliers) ne disposant d'aucune autorisation, ni d'aucun enregistrement au titre des Installations classées pour la protection de l'environnement ou agrément VHU, ainsi que des particuliers qui vendent des pièces sur Internet, au mépris des différentes obligations qui incombent aux professionnels (gestion de la pollution, traçabilité, contrôle et garantie, T.V.A., Urssaf, etc.).

Le statut de la pièce de réemploi: la France est le seul pays à considérer les pièces de réemploi comme des déchets en ce qui concerne le régime de leur commercialisation à l'export. Cette situation oblige les centres VHU à réinvestir dans de nouvelles certifications, destinées à sortir lesdites pièces de ce statut. Une démarche coûteuse qui vient endiguer les efforts de toute la filière pour développer l'usage des pièces d'occasion.

Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(23 juin 2014)

Les services de la Commission ont reçu une plainte émanant des recycleurs français de véhicules hors d'usage, étayée par des éléments de preuve. L'analyse de cette plainte est actuellement en cours.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004634/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Approval of ELV recycling: French motor industry body informs the Commission

For several months now, discussions between recycling operators from the French National Motor Industry Council (CNPA) and the French Ministry of the Environment have been making no progress, in spite of the abuses which occur on a daily basis in the French end-of-life vehicles (ELV) sector. The CNPA notes in particular that 'new regulatory requirements imposed on ELV recycling centres fly in the face of common sense' and regrets that the French Conseil d'État [highest administrative court] 'rejected the CNPA's request for the annulment of the Inter-ministerial Order of 2 May 2012 on the approval of ELV centre operators'.

In view of this situation, the Commission encouraged the CNPA to submit a formal report on of the substance of the problems relating to ELVs. In its report, the CNPA notes that it 'cannot accept the constant addition of new layers of rules, and objects in particular to the requirement that the floors of vehicle storage areas should be sealed, a measure which is extremely costly and disproportionate'.

The debate centres on three main points:

The identical treatment of ELVs and vehicles awaiting inspection: this is a case of unjustified over-transposition. The sealing requirement under the Order of 2 May 2012 relates to floors occupied by ELVs as well as to vehicles awaiting inspection.

The urgent need for action to curb the growth in unauthorised ELV recycling sites. The situation is getting worse: the percentage of ELVs being recycled via lawful channels fell sharply from 73% in 2010 to 57% in 2012. The CNPA is calling for tighter on-the-spot checks on approved ELV recycling centres which do not comply with their specifications, unauthorised disposal sites (run by professionals or by private individuals) not registered as Classified Installations for environmental or ELV recycling approval purposes, and individuals selling spare parts on the Internet, disregarding the various obligations which professionals in this area have to meet (concerning pollution management, traceability, checks and guarantees, VAT, social security contributions, etc.).

The status of recovered spare parts: France is the only country to classify recovered spare parts as waste for the purpose of their sale abroad. This requires ELV centres to invest in new certificates so as to redeem spare parts from this classification. This is a costly procedure which holds up the whole industry's efforts to encourage the use of spares.

What is the Commission's response to this?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

The Commission services have received a complaint with supporting evidence from the French recyclers of end of life vehicles and the assessment of this complaint is currently on-going.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004636/14
au Conseil
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 avril 2014)

Objet: Légitimité du Sahara occidental

La presse s'est faite l'écho d'un débat au Conseil sur «les perspectives de solution de la question du Sahara occidental conformément à la légitimité internationale».

1. Qu'en est-il?

2. Quelles sont les pistes dégagées?

3. Quelles sont les positions de chacun?

Réponse
(23 juin 2014)

Le Conseil n'a pas débattu de la question qu'évoque l'Honorable Parlementaire. D'une manière générale, l'UE soutient les efforts du Secrétaire général de l'ONU visant à parvenir à une solution politique juste, durable et mutuellement acceptable, qui permette l'autodétermination du peuple du Sahara occidental dans le cadre d'arrangements conformes aux buts et aux principes énoncés dans la Charte des Nations unies. L'UE encourage les parties à rechercher une solution négociée au conflit et salue les efforts déployés par l'envoyé personnel du Secrétaire général de l'ONU, M. Christopher Ross, et la MINURSO (mission de maintien de la paix de l'ONU). Elle est préoccupée par la longue durée du conflit et par les conséquences de celui-ci pour la sécurité, le respect des Droits de l'homme et l'intégration dans la région. Elle appelle toutes les parties à s'abstenir de tout acte de violence et les encourage à poursuivre les efforts qu'elles déploient pour renforcer la promotion et la protection des Droits de l'homme au Sahara occidental et dans les camps de Tindouf. Dans l'éventualité où une solution politique au conflit serait proche, l'UE envisagerait des mesures de soutien afin de faciliter la mise en œuvre de cette solution.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004636/14
to the Council
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Legitimacy of Western Sahara

Reports have surfaced in the press of a Council debate on the prospects for a solution to the Western Sahara question in accordance with international legitimacy.

1. Can the Council provide further details?

2. What avenues have been explored?

3. What positions have been adopted?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed the issue referred to by the Honourable Member. In general, the EU supports the UN Secretary-General's efforts to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution which will provide for the self-determination of the people of the Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. The EU encourages the parties to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict and welcomes the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General's Personal Envoy Christopher Ross and the Minurso (UN peacekeeping mission). It is concerned at the long duration of this conflict and about the implications for security, respect for human rights and integration in the region. It calls on all parties to refrain from violence and encourages the parties to continue in their respective efforts to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in the Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps. Should a political solution to the conflict be within reach, the EU would consider supporting measures in order to facilitate the implementation of such a solution.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004638/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-mogħdijiet għall-karozzi tal-linja

Fi ħdan il-qafas tal-leġiżlazzjoni dwar it-trasport fl-UE, il-Kummissjoni għandha l-intenzjoni li tistabbilixxi xi regoli speċifiċi fir-rigward tal-mogħdijiet għall-karozzi tal-linja?

Il-Kummissjoni għandha xi informazzjoni dwar is-sistemi differenti tal-mogħdijiet għall-karozzi tal-linja applikati fl-Istati Membri differenti?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Kallas f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Ġunju 2014)

1.) Il-Kummissjoni mhijiex beħsiebha toħroġ regoli speċifiċi dwar il-korsiji tal-karozzi tal-linja fil-qafas tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE dwar it-trasport.

Madankollu, ħafna bliet qegħdin jissaraw biex itejbu l-kwalità tas-servizzi tat-trasport pubbliku billi jimplimentaw korsiji ddedikati għall-karozzi tal-linja (u sistemi oħra ta' prijorità għall-karozzi tal-linja). F'dan il-kuntest, il-Kummissjoni tat l-appoġġ tagħha lil bliet bħal Ġenova, Gdynia, Nantes u Tallinn fl-ittestjar ta' sistemi innovattivi ta' korsiji tal-karozzi tal-linja, pereżempju fil-qafas tal-Inizjattiva CIVITAS tal-UE. Xi bliet wettqu valutazzjoni, fost l-oħrajn, ta' disinji differenti ta' korsiji tal-karozzi tal-linja, tal-potenzjal għal soluzzjonijiet ta' Sistemi ta' Trasport Intelliġenti għal operati mtejba tal-korsiji tal-karozzi tal-linja, jew ir-rwol tal-infurzar.

2.) Il-Kummissjoni ma għandhiex ġabra komprensiva tad-diversi sistemi operattivi ta' korsiji tal-karozzi tal-linja eżistenti fl-UE kollha. Madankollu, tagħrif siewi dwar id-disinn u l-operat ta' sistemi ta' prijorità tal-karozzi tal-linja (inklużi l-korsiji) jinstab eż. fuq il-websajt taċ-CIVITAS (www.civitas.eu) u fuq il-websajt tal-Osservatorju tal-Mobbiltà Urbana (www.eltis.org).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004638/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Bus lanes

Within the framework of legislation on EU transport, does the Commission intend to issue any specific rules on bus lanes?

Does the Commission have any information on the different systems for bus lanes applied in the different Member States?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

1. The Commission has no intention to issue specific rules on bus lanes within the framework of EU legislation on transport.

However, many cities are striving to improve service quality in public transport by implementing dedicated bus lanes (and other bus priority systems.) In this context, the Commission has supported cities such as Genova, Gdynia, Nantes, or Tallinn in testing innovative bus lane systems, e.g. within the framework of the EU's Civitas Initiative. Cities have evaluated *inter alia* different bus lane designs, the potential for Intelligent Transport System solutions for improved bus lane operations, or the role of enforcement.

2. The Commission does not have a comprehensive overview of the various bus lane systems in operation across the EU. Nevertheless, valuable information on design and operation of bus priority systems (including bus lanes) can be found e.g. on the Civitas website (www.civitas.eu) and the Urban Mobility Observatory (www.eltis.org).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004639/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-kompetittività tat-turiżmu fl-UE

Riċentement, il-Forum Ekonomiku Dinji ppubblika r-Rapport dwar il-Kompetittività fir-rigward tal-Ivjaġġar u t-Turiżmu għall-2013. Bosta Stati Membri tal-UE marru estremament tajjeb. Madankollu, xi wħud dehru li kien għad fadlilhom x'jaqdfu f'din il-kwistjoni.

Peress li t-turiżmu żdied bħala qasam ġdid ta' kompetenza wara r-ratifika u d-dħul fis-seħħ tat-Trattat ta' Lisbona, il-Kummissjoni se tħejji xi miżura speċifika sabiex ittejjeb il-kompetittività tal-Istati Membri fil-qasam tal-ivjaġġar u t-turiżmu?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(6 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Bi qbil u bis-saħħa tal-bażi legali dwar it-turiżmu pprovduta fit-Trattat ta' Lisbona, f'Ġunju 2010, il-Kummissjoni adottat Komunikazzjoni ddedikata ([1]), biex tagħti spinta ġdida lill-politika tat-turiżmu tal-UE, u biex issaħħaħ il-kompetittivà tas-settur tat-turiżmu Ewropew. Il-Komunikazzjoni tistipula strateġija olistika u pjan ta' azzjoni. Hija mmirata li tħeġġeġ il-holqien ta' ambjent favorevoli għall-impriżi fis-settur, u li tappoġġja l-kompetittività sostenibbli tiegħu, filwaqt li żżid il-potenzjal biex jiġġenera t-tkabbir u l-impjieg.

Il-Kummissjoni implimentat b'suċċess il-maġġoranza tal-azzjonijiet stipulati fil-Komunikazzjoni, b'enfażi fuq il-prijoritajiet li ġejjin: iż-żieda tad-domanda tat-turiżmu, kemm mill-UE stess u kemm minn pajjiżi terzi, b'enfażi partikulari fuq l-estensjoni tal-istaġun tat-turiżmu; it-titjib u d-diversifikazzjoni tal-offerta turistika, b'mod partikulari permezz tal-iżvilupp u l-promozzjoni ta' prodotti turistiċi tematiċi pan-Ewropej; it-tisħiħ tal-kwalità tat-turiżmu ([2]), is-sostenibbiltà, l-aċċessibbiltà, il-ħiliet u l-użu tal-ICTs; it-tisħiħ tal-għarfien soċjoekonomiku tas-settur; u l-promozzjoni tal-Ewropa bħala destinazzjoni unika; kif ukoll l-integrazzjoni ġenerali tat-turiżmu f'politiki oħra tal-UE. Il-Kummissjoni seddqet il-kooperazzjoni tagħha ma' pajjiżi terzi biex jippromwovu flimkien mudelli ta' żvilupp sostenibbli u responsabbli tat-turiżmu, kif ukoll l-iskambju tal-aqwa prassi ([3]). Barra minn hekk, middet pass importanti lejn it-titjib tal-protezzjoni għal min ikun bil-vaganzi, billi mmodernizzat ir-regoli tal-UE dwar il-pakketti ta' vaganzi ([4]), kif ukoll id-dispożizzjonijiet għall-ksib tal-viża b'mod li sar iktar faċli għall-vjaġġaturi leġittimi, bil-għan li tintlaħaq politika komuni tal-viża iktar intelliġenti ([5]).

Il-Kummissjoni tippubblika regolarment aġġornament dwar l-implimentazzjoni tal-azzjonijiet tagħha fuq il-websajt tagħha ([6]).

([1]) COM(2010) 352 finali, 30.6.2010 — "L-Ewropa, l-ewwel destinazzjoni turistika fid-dinja — qafas politiku ġdid għat-turiżmu Ewropew".

([2]) Fi Frar 2014, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill dwar il-Prinċipji ta' Kwalità tat-Turiżmu Ewropew, sabiex tittejjeb l-informazzjoni lill-konsumaturi dwar il-kwalità tas-servizzi turistiċi, u b'hekk tiżdied il-fiduċja tal-konsumaturi fis-servizzi tat-turiżmu Ewropej.

([3]) Il-Kummissjoni rxuxtat il-kooperazzjoni internazzjonali fil-qafas tat-turiżmu billi ffirmat tmintax-il ftehim politiku għall-kooperazzjoni ma' pajjiżi terzi. Dawn il-ftehimiet jipprevedu kooperazzjoni aktar fil-fond f'dan il-qafas, u dan għandu jwassal għal djalogu regolari dwar żvilupp sostenibbli tat-turiżmu. Barra minn hekk, attenzjoni speċjali lir-rwol tal-kooperazzjoni fil-qasam tat-turiżmu kienet prominenti wkoll fil-kuntest tal-Missjonijiet għat-Tkabbir tagħha f'diversi pajjiżi tal-Ewropa, l-Afrika ta' Fuq, l-Amerika Latina u l-Asja.

([4]) F'Lulju 2013, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta għar-rieżami tad-Direttiva dwar il-Vjaġġi Kollox Kompriż (90/314/KEE).

([5]) F'April 2014, il-Kummissjoni adottat proposta leġiżlattiva biex temenda r-Regolament (KE) Nru 810/2009 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tat-13 ta' Lulju 2009 li jistabbilixxi Kodiċi Komunitarju dwar il-Viżi (Kodiċi dwar il-Viżi).

([6]) Għal iktar informazzjoni: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_mt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004639/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Competitiveness of tourism in the EU

The World Economic Forum has recently published the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report for 2013. Many EU Member States have fared extremely well. However, some seem to be lagging behind in this matter.

Since tourism has been added as a new area of competence following the ratification and entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, will the Commission come up with any specific measure to improve the competitiveness of Member States in the area of travel and tourism?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

In line with and capitalising on the tourism legal basis provided for in the Lisbon Treaty, in June 2010, the Commission adopted a dedicated Communication ([1]), to give a new impetus to the EU's tourism policy and enhance the competitiveness of the European tourism sector. The communication sets out a holistic strategy and an action plan. It is aimed at encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for undertakings in the sector and supporting its sustainable competitiveness, while increasing its potential to generate growth and jobs.

The Commission has successfully implemented the majority of the actions set out in the communication, focusing on the following priorities: increasing tourism demand, both intra-EU and from third countries, with particular focus on the extension of the tourism season; improving and diversifying the tourism offer, in particular through the development and promotion of pan-European thematic tourism products; enhancing tourism quality ([2]), sustainability, accessibility, skills and ICT use; enhancing the socioeconomic knowledge of the sector; and promoting Europe as a unique destination; as well as mainstreaming tourism in other EU policies. The Commission reinforced its cooperation with third countries to promote sustainable and responsible tourism development models and the exchange of best practice ([3]). Moreover, it made an important step towards improving the protection for holiday makers by modernising EU rules on package holidays ([4]) and it has modernised the visa provisions, offering further facilitation to legitimate travellers with a view to achieving a smarter common visa policy ([5]).

The Commission regularly publishes updates on the implementation of its actions on their website ([6]).

([1]) COM(2010) 352 final of 30.06.2010 — 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination — a new political framework for tourism in Europe'.

([2]) In February 2014, the Commission proposed a Council Recommendation on European Tourism Quality Principles to improve information to consumers on the quality of tourism services, thereby improving consumer trust in European tourism services.

([3]) The Commission revamped the international cooperation in the field of tourism by signing eighteen political agreements for cooperation with third countries. These agreements foresee deepened cooperation in this field, which should lead to a regular dialogue concerning a sustainable development of tourism. Furthermore, special attention to the role of cooperation in the field of tourism has also been prominent in the context of its Missions for Growth in various European, Northern African, Latin-American and Asian countries.

([4]) In July 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for the revision of the Package Travel Directive (90/314/EEC).

([5]) In April 2014, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Union and of the Council of 13 .7. 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code).

([6]) For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004640/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Ostaklu doppju tal-lingwi

Id-Direttorat għall-Kwalità u l-Istandards fl-Edukazzjoni f'Malta reċentement ħareġ ċifri dwar tfal barranin li jattendu skejjel tal-gvern f'Malta. Ftit 'il fuq minn 272 tifel u tifla li jattendu l-iskejjel tal-gvern ma jistgħux jikkomunikaw mal-għalliema tagħhom jew ma' studenti oħra peress li ma jifhmux u lanqas jitkellmu la bil-Malti u lanqas bl-Ingliż.

Peress li dan huwa fenomenu li bosta Stati Membri qed jesperjenzaw, il-Kummissjoni għandha l-intenzjoni li tieħu azzjoni f'dan il-qasam, bħall-qsim ta' prattiki fost l-Istati Membri, sabiex din il-kwistjoni inkwetanti tiġi indirizzata?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Mejju 2014)

L-Onorevoli Membru huwa konxju li, f'konformità mal-Artikolu 165 tat-Trattat dwar il-Funzjonament tal-Unjoni Ewropea, ir-responsabbiltà għall-kontenut u l-organizzazzjoni tas-sistemi edukattivi u ta' taħriġ hija kompletament fil-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri. Permezz tal-Metodu Miftuħ ta' Koordinazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja lill-Istati Membri fl-isforzi tagħhom biex itejbu s-sistemi ta' edukazzjoni tagħhom.

Wara l-Green Paper tal-Kummissjoni tal-2008 dwar "Il-Migrazzjoni u l-mobilità: sfidi u opportunitajiet għas-sistemi tal-edukazzjoni tal-UE" COM(2008) 423, il-Kunsill adotta l-Konklużjonijiet li jirrikonoxxu l-qabża persistenti fil-prestazzjoni bejn l-istudenti li għandhom sfond ta' migrazzjoni u dawk tal-post. Dawn jgħidu li l-profiċjenza fil-lingwa uffiċjali tal-pajjiż ospitanti hija prerekwiżit għas-suċċess edukattiv u kruċjali kemm għall-integrazzjoni soċjali tagħhom kif ukoll għal dik professjonali. Huma jinkoraġġixxu taħriġ speċjalizzat għall-għalliema għal dik li hija ġestjoni tad-diversità lingwistika u kulturali.

L-edukazzjoni tal-migranti minn dejjem kienet ukoll waħda mill-prijoritajiet għal kooperazzjoni Ewropea fl-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ (ET2020). Għaldaqstant, ir-riżultati tal-migranti ġew immonitorjati permezz tal-Monitor tal-Edukazzjoni u t-Taħriġ ([1]). Dan iwassal għal informazzjoni ddettaljata dwar id-differenzi fil-prestazzjoni bejn il-migranti u dawk tal-post imkejla skont l-indikaturi ET2020.

Ir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill tal-2011 dwar pjanijiet politiċi biex jitnaqqas it-tluq bikri mill-iskejjel tenfasizza strateġiji komprensivi mmirati lejn studenti migranti. Hija tenfasizza l-benefiċċji tal-edukazzjoni u t-tħaris tat-tfal bikrija u ta' kwalità għolja.

Il-mezz attwali tal-UE dwar il-qsim ta' prassi u għarfien dwar l-edukazzjoni tal-migranti hija n-netwerk SIRIUS. Proġetti ta' edukazzjoni marbuta mal-kwistjoni tal-migrazzjoni jistgħu jiġu ffinanzjati wkoll permezz tal-programm Erasmus +.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/indicators-benchmarks_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004640/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Double language barrier

The Maltese Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education has recently issued figures on foreign children attending state schools in Malta. Just over 272 children attending state schools cannot communicate with their teachers or fellow students since they do not understand or speak either Maltese or English.

As this is a phenomenon experienced by many Member States, is the Commission envisaging any action in this area, such as the sharing of practices among Member States in order to address this worrying issue?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The Honourable Member will be aware that, in accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. Through the Open Method of Coordination, the Commission supports Member States in their efforts to improve their education systems.

Following the 2008 Commission Green Paper 'Migration & mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems' COM(2008) 423, the Council adopted Conclusions which acknowledge the persistent achievement gap between pupils with a migrant background and natives. They state that proficiency in the official language of the host country is a prerequisite for educational success and key to both social and professional integration. They encourage specialised training for teachers in managing linguistic and cultural diversity.

The education of migrants has also been one of the priorities for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020). Consequently, the results of migrants have been monitored through the Education and Training Monitor ([1]). This leads to detailed information on the differences in achievements between migrants and natives measured against the ET2020 indicators.

The 2011 Council Recommendation on policies to reduce early school leaving emphasises comprehensive strategies targeting migrant students. It stresses the benefits of high-quality early childhood education and care.

The current EU vehicle on sharing practices and knowledge on migrant education is the Sirius network. Education projects linked to the issue of migration can also be financed through the Erasmus+ programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/indicators-benchmarks_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004641/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Ugwaljanza/diskriminazzjoni

Il-Kummissjoni ddikjarat li issa ġew stabbiliti regoli biex tiġi indirizzata d-diskriminazzjoni fit-28 Stat Membru kollha kemm huma. Madankollu, ġie nnutat ukoll li għad baqa' sfidi ewlenin biex tiġi kkumbattuta d-diskriminazzjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni kif se tassisti lill-awtoritajiet nazzjonali biex jegħlbu dawn l-isfidi? Il-Kummissjoni se ssegwi l-progress li jsir fi ħdan l-Istati Membri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Ir-rapport konġunt ta' implimentazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni dwar id-Direttivi 2000/43/KE dwar l-Ugwaljanza Razzjali u 2000/78/KE dwar l-Ugwaljanza fl-Impjiegi, li ġie adottat fis-17 ta' Jannar 2014 ([1]) jirrikonoxxi li filwaqt li l-qafas leġiżlattiv huwa fis-seħħ fl-Istati Membri kollha xorta għad hemm sfidi f'termini tal-applikazzjoni tar-regoli b'mod xieraq fil-prattika.

Il-Kummissjoni tibqa' tissorvelja fuq bażi kontinwa li l-leġiżlazzjoni tal-Istat Membru hi u tibqa' f'konformità ma' dawn id-Direttivi u taħdem ukoll mill-qrib flimkien mal-Istati Membri biex tikkumbatti d-diskriminazzjoni u torganizza attivitajiet regolari ta' tagħlim bejn il-pari biex taqsam prattika tajba dwar politiki pubbliċi li jikkumbattu d-diskriminazzjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni tappoġġa wkoll inizjattivi nazzjonali biex tikkumbatti d-diskriminazzjoni permezz tal-programm PROGRESS u mill-2014 permezz tal-programm tad-Drittijiet, l-Ugwaljanza u ċ-Ċittadinanza ([2]). Dan il-finanzjament jippermetti lill-Istati Membri jwettqu attivitajiet biex iqajmu kuxjenza u jiġbru dejta dwar l-ugwaljanza, li huma wħud mill-isfidi identifikati mill-Kummissjoni fir-rapport. Il-Kummissjoni qed tiffinanzja wkoll lin-Netwerk Ewropew għall-Korpi tal-Ugwaljanza ([3]) li jippermetti lil korpi nazzjonali tal-ugwaljanza biex jiksbu u jeżerċitaw il-potenzjal sħiħ tagħhom permezz ta' gruppi ta' ħidma, taħriġ u pubblikazzjonijiet.

([1]) COM(2014) 2 finali, 17.1.2014.
([2]) COM(2014) 2 finali.
([3]) http://www.equineteurope.org.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004641/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Equality/discrimination

The Commission has declared that rules to tackle discrimination are now in place in all 28 Member States. However, it has also been noted that key challenges remain in combatting discrimination.

How will the Commission assist national authorities in overcoming these challenges? Will the Commission monitor progress within the Member States?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission's joint implementation report on Directives 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality and 2000/78/EC on Employment Equality, which was adopted on 17 January 2014 ([1]) recognises that while the legislative framework is in place in all Member States there are still challenges in terms of the rules being properly applied on the ground.

The Commission keeps monitoring on a continuous basis that Member State legislation is and stays in compliance with these Directives and also works closely together with the Member States to fight discrimination and organises regular peer learning activities to exchange good practice on public policies combatting discrimination.

The Commission also supports national initiatives to combat discrimination through the Progress programme and as of 2014 through the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme ([2]). This funding allows Member States to carry out awareness raising activities and collect data on equality, which are some of the challenges identified by the Commission in the report. The Commission is also funding the European Network of Equality Bodies ([3]) which enables national equality bodies to achieve and exercise their full potential through working groups, trainings and publications.

([1]) COM(2014) 2 final, 17.1.2014.
([2]) COM(2014) 2 final.
([3]) http://www.equineteurope.org

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004642/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sistemi tas-saħħa tal-UE

Il-Kummissjoni adottat kommunikazzjoni li tfassal aġenda tal-UE biex tqiegħed lis-sistemi tas-saħħa tal-Ewropa f'pożizzjoni li jkunu jistgħu jaffaċċjaw l-isfidi u l-pressjonijiet attwali. Din il-komunikazzjoni titfa' dawl fuq numru ta' inizjattivi li l-UE tista' tiżviluppa u tibni fuqhom biex tgħin lill-Istati Membri jiżguraw li jintlaħqu l-aspirazzjonijiet taċ-ċittadini għall-kura ta' kwalità għolja. L-enfasi hija mistennija li titqiegħed fuq metodi u għodod li jippermettu lill-Istati Membri biex jagħmlu s-sistemi tas-saħħa tagħhom aktar effettivi, aċċessibbli u reżiljenti, f'konformità mar-rakkomandazzjonijiet ta' riforma indirizzati lilhom fil-kuntest tas-Semestru Ewropew. Barra minn hekk, l-Istati Membri qed jitħeġġu jagħmlu wkoll użu tajjeb tal-istrumenti tal-iffinanzjar Ewropej, bħall-fondi strutturali, għall-implimentazzjoni tar-riformi rrakkomandati.

Il-Kummissjoni laħqet ukoll stadji importanti oħra fir-rigward tas-saħħa, bħall-adozzjoni tad-Direttiva 2011/24/UE dwar l-applikazzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-pazjenti fil-qasam tal-kura tas-saħħa transkonfinali. Għal dan il-għan, il-Kummissjoni bħsiebha żżid il-momentum għal aspetti oħra li għandhom x'jaqsmu mas-saħħa pubblika? Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni kif se tiżgura li l-Istati Membri jsegwu r-rakkomandazzjonijiet numerużi li qed isiru?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(12 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni qed tappoġġa attivament l-implimentazzjoni tal-inizjattivi msemmija fil-Komunikazzjoni tagħha dwar sistemi tas-saħħa effettivi, aċċessibbli u reżiljenti, pereżempju permezz tal-appoġġ finanzjarju għall-kooperazzjoni bejn l-Istati Membri fl-oqsma tal-forza tax-xogħol tas-saħħa, is-sikurezza tal-pazjenti u l-kwalità tal-kura permezz tal-Programm tas-Saħħa.

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni se tissorvelja mill-qrib it-traspożizzjoni mill-Istati Membri tad-Direttiva 2011/24/UE dwar l-applikazzjoni tad-drittijiet tal-pazjenti fil-qasam tal-kura tas-saħħa transkonfinali u se tkompli tappoġġa l-ħidma tan-netwerks dwar is-Saħħa-e u l-Valutazzjoni tat-Teknoloġija tas-Saħħa stabbiliti skont din id-Direttiva. Id-Direttiva tirrikjedi li l-Kummissjoni tfassal l-ewwel rapport dwar it-tħaddim tagħha u tressqu quddiem il-Parlament Ewropew u l-Kunsill sal-25 ta' Ottubru 2015.

Il-Kummissjoni hija wkoll lesta li tappoġġa l-kooperazzjoni bejn l-Istati Membri f'oqsma bħalma huma l-użu kosteffettiv tal-mediċini u l-valutazzjoni tal-prestazzjoni tas-sistemi tas-saħħa.

Fl-aħħar nett, permezz tal-Programm tas-Saħħa ([1]) il-Kummissjoni għandha l-għan li tappoġġa azzjonijiet li għandhom l-għan li jħeġġu l-użu tal-innovazzjoni fis-saħħa, irawmu kura tas-saħħa aħjar u aktar sikura, jippromwovu s-saħħa u jipprevjenu l-mard, u jipproteġu liċ-ċittadini mit-theddid għas-saħħa transkonfinali. Dan jinkludi t-trawwim tal-kooperazzjoni fuq firxa wiesgħa ta' kwistjonijiet inklużi l-mard rari, il-prevenzjoni u l-kontroll tal-kanċer, il-ġlieda kontra l-HIV/AIDS, u l-indirizzar ta' fatturi determinanti ewlenin bħalma huwa l-konsum tat-tabakk, l-alkoħol u n-nutriment.

([1]) Ara r-Regolament (UE) Nru 282/2014 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-11 ta' Marzu 2014, disponibbli: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/MT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0282&from=MT

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004642/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: EU health systems

The Commission has adopted a communication that lays down an EU agenda for making Europe's health systems fit to face current challenges and pressures. This communication highlights a number of initiatives the EU can develop and build upon to help Member States ensure that citizens' aspirations to high-quality care can be met. The focus is expected to be on methods and tools that will allow Member States to make their health systems more effective, accessible and resilient, in line with reform recommendations addressed to them in the context of the European Semester. Moreover, Member States are also being encouraged to make good use of European funding instruments, such as structural funds, in implementing the recommended reforms.

The Commission has also achieved other milestones in relation to health, such as the adoption of Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. To this end, is the Commission envisaging building up the momentum on other aspects dealing with public health? Moreover, how will the Commission ensure that the Member States follow up on the numerous recommendations being made?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The Commission is actively supporting the implementation of the initiatives mentioned in its communication on effective, accessible and resilient health systems, for instance through financial support to Member States' cooperation in the areas of health workforce, patient safety and quality of care through the Health Programme.

Further, the Commission will closely monitor the transposition by Member States of Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare and will continue supporting the work of the networks on eHealth and Health Technology Assessment established under this directive. The directive requires that the Commission draws up the first report on the operation of the directive and submit it to the European Parliament and the Council by 25 October 2015.

The Commission is also ready to support cooperation between Member States in areas such as the cost-effective use of medicines and health system performance assessment.

Finally, through the Health Programme ([1]) the Commission seeks to support action aimed at encouraging the uptake of innovation in health, fostering better and safer healthcare, promoting good health and preventing diseases, and protecting citizens from cross-border health threats. This includes fostering cooperation on a wide range of issues including rare diseases, cancer prevention and control, fighting HIV/AIDS, and addressing key health determinants such as tobacco consumption, alcohol and nutrition.

([1]) See Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.3.2014, available from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0282&from=EN

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004643/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Għajnuna legali għal ċittadini mhux membri tal-UE

Il-Kummissjoni, tista' tispeċifika jekk id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2002/87.KE tas-27 ta' Jannar 2003 għat-titjib tal-aċċess għal ġustizzja f'tilwimiet bejn il-konfini billi tistabbilixxi regoli komuni minimi konnessi ma' għajnuna legali għal tilwimiet bħal dawn, tkoprix ċittadini mhux membri tal-UE li jirrisjedu f'pajjiżi tal-UE?

Il-Kummissjoni, għandha informazzjoni dwar jekk is-sistemi adottati minn Stati Membri differenti jkoprux lil ċittadini mhux membri tal-UE li jirrisjedu f'pajjiżi tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 2002/8/KE tas-27 ta' Jannar 2003 biex ittejjeb l-aċċess għal ġustizzja f'tilwimiet bejn il-konfini billi tistabbilixxi regoli komuni minimi konnessi ma' għajnuna legali għal tilwimiet bħal dawn tkopri ċittadini li mhumiex mill-UE li jirrisjedu f'pajjiżi tal-UE. L-Artikolu 2(1) tad-Direttiva jipprevedi li għall-finijiet tad-Direttiva, tilwima ta' bejn il-konfini hija waħda fejn il-parti li tapplika għall-għajnuna legali fil-kuntest tad-Direttiva tkun iddomiċiljata jew abitwalment residenti fi Stat Membru li mhuwiex l-Istat Membru li fih tippresjedi l-qorti jew fejn id-deċiżjoni għandha tkun infurzata. Barra minn hekk, l-Artikolu 4 tad-Direttiva jistipula li l-Istati Membri jagħtu għajnuna legali mingħajr diskriminazzjoni lil ċittadini tal-Unjoni u lil ċittadini ta' pajjiżi terzi li jirrisjedu legalment fi Stat Membru.

Skont l-informazzjoni kkomunikata mill-Istati Membri lill-Kummissjoni, il-miżuri adottati mill-Istati Membri sabiex tiġi trasposta d-Direttiva huma skont l-Artikolu 4 tad-Direttiva. Għaldaqstant, is-sistemi adottati mill-Istati Membri ikopru ċittadini li mhumiex mill-UE li jirrisjedu f'pajjiżi tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004643/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Legal aid for non-EU nationals

Can the Commission specify whether Council Directive 2002/8/EC of 27 January 2003 to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid for such disputes covers non-EU nationals residing in EU countries?

Does the Commission have information on whether the systems adopted by the different Member States cover non-EU nationals residing in EU countries?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

Council Directive 2002/8/EC of 27 January 2003 to improve access to justice in cross-border disputes by establishing minimum common rules relating to legal aid for such disputes covers non-EU nationals residing in EU countries. Article 2(1) of the directive provides that for the purposes of the directive, a cross-border dispute is one where the party applying for legal aid in the context of the directive is domiciled or habitually resident in a Member State other than the Member State where the court is sitting or where the decision is to be enforced. Furthermore, Article 4 of the directive provides that Member States shall grant legal aid without discrimination to Union citizens and third-country nationals residing lawfully in a Member State.

According to the information communicated by Member States to the Commission, the measures adopted by Member States in order to transpose the directive are in compliance with Article 4 of the directive. Accordingly, the systems adopted by Member States cover non-EU nationals residing in EU countries.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004644/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-ġestjoni tal-istress fuq il-post tax-xogħol

L-istress huwa fost dawk il-problemi tas-saħħa relatati max-xogħol li l-iktar isiru rapporti dwarhom fl-Ewropa u hu maħsub li huwa l-kawża tal-biċċa l-kbira ta' ġranet tax-xogħol mitlufa. L-Aġenzija Ewropea għas-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol (EU-OSHA) irrikonoxxiet b'mod xieraq din il-problema tas-saħħa billi niedet il-kampanja "Inqas Stress għal iktar Saħħa fuq ix-xogħol" biex issir sensibilizzazzjoni dwar ir-riskji psikoloġiċi, fiżiċi u soċjali marbutin mal-istress fuq il-post tax-xogħol. Il-Kummissjoni laqgħet din il-kampanja.

F'dan ir-rigward, il-Kummissjoni x'qed tippjana li tagħmel rigward l-istress u r-riskji psikosoċjali, speċjalment b'rabta mal-Qafas Strateġiku tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa u s-Sikurezza fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol 2014-2020, li kellu jiġi ppreżentat f'Ġunju? Il-Kummissjoni qed tipprevedi xi azzjoni iktar konkreta dwar il-kwistjoni, inklużi proposti leġiżlattivi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(5 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Ir-riżultati tal-istħarriġ riċenti tal-Ewrobarometru dwar il-Kundizzjonijiet tax-Xogħol ([1]) juru li l-ħaddiema jqisu l-esponiment għall-istress bħala r-riskju ewlieni għas-saħħa u s-sigurtà fuq il-post tax-xogħol. Dawn ir-riżultati, flimkien mal-indikazzjonijiet mogħtija permezz tal-evalwazzjoni tal-Istrateġija tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol 2007-2013 ([2]) preċedenti, juru li l-istress marbut max-xogħol huwa kwistjoni li jixirqilha attenzjoni speċifika fil-Qafas Strateġiku tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa u s-Sigurtà fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol 2014-2020 li għad irid jitnieda u li l-Kummissjoni beħsiebha tippreżenta f'Ġunju. Il-Kummissjoni qed tqis inizjattivi speċifiċi possibbli f'dan il-qasam li għandhom jiġu preżentati f'dan il-Qafas.

Fir-rigward tal-fastidju u l-vjolenza fuq il-post tax-xogħol, fenomenu li jaqa' fil-kategorija tar-riskji psikosoċjali, bħalissa l-Kummissjoni qed tniedi studju biex tivvaluta l-implimentazzjoni tal-Ftehim dwar Qafas Awtonomu tal-Imsieħba Soċjali dwar il-Fastidju u l-Vjolenza fuq il-Post tax-Xogħol ([3]). Ir-riżultati ta' dan l-istudju se jkunu disponibbli fl-2015.

Il-Kummissjoni tappoġġa inizjattivi biex jiġu indirizzati riskji psikosoċjali anki permezz tal-opportunitajiet ta' finanzjament tagħha marbuta mad-djalogu soċjali, ir-relazzjonijiet industrijali u l-appoġġ għat-trejdjunjins, permezz tal-finanzjament ta' proġetti speċifiċi dwar is-suġġett meta dan ikun rilevanti.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_398_en.pdf
([2]) SWD(2013) 202 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=521&langId=en&agreementId=5000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004644/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Managing stress at work

Stress is one of the most reported work-related health problems in Europe and is believed to be the cause of the majority of lost working days. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) has duly recognised this health problem by launching the 'Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress' campaign to raise awareness about the psychological, physical and social risks linked to stress at work. The Commission has welcomed this campaign.

In this connection, what is the Commission planning to do with regard to stress and psychosocial risks, especially in relation to the upcoming EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020, which is due to be presented in June? Is the Commission envisaging more concrete action on the matter, including legislative proposals?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The results of the recent Eurobarometer survey on Working Conditions ([1]) show that exposure to stress is considered by workers to be the main workplace health and safety risk. These results, together with the indications provided by the evaluation of the previous EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work 2007-2012 ([2]), show that work-related stress is an issue that deserves specific attention in the forthcoming EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 that the Commission intends to present in June. The Commission is considering possible specific initiatives in this field to be presented in the abovementioned Framework.

With regard to harassment and violence at work, a phenomenon falling into the category of psychosocial risks, the Commission is currently launching a study to assess the implementation of the 2007 Social Partners' Autonomous Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at Work ([3]). The results of this study will be available in 2015.

The Commission supports initiatives to tackle psychosocial risks also through its funding opportunities linked to social dialogue, industrial relations and trade unions support, by financing — when relevant — specific projects on the topic.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_398_en.pdf
([2]) SWD(2013) 202 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=521&langId=en&agreementId=5000

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004645/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Offerti li jistgħu jwasslu għal prattiki kummerċjali inġusti

Bosta offerti, għal bookings ta' vaganzi u crusies, jiġu offruti lill-operaturi għal unitajiet familjari magħmula minn erba' persuni iżda mhux għal unitajiet familjari iżgħar jew akbar minn hekk. Dan iqiegħed lil ċerti unitajiet familjari fi żvantaġġ u jaffettwa negattivament id-drittijiet tagħhom bħala konsumaturi.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tikkunsidra l-possibilità li tiddeskrivi din id-disparità bejn unitajiet familjari bħala prattika kummerċjali inġusta?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(17 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Ma hemm l-ebda regoli tal-UE li jipprojbixxu l-prattika ta' kumpaniji tal-vaganzi biex jagħmlu offerti speċifiċi għal familji ta' erbgħa. Il-kumpaniji huma ġeneralment liberi li jiddeterminaw il-prezz tas-servizzi tagħhom.

Sakemm il-formituri tal-akkomodazzjoni u l-operaturi turistiċi jipprovdu informazzjoni ċara lill-konsumaturi tagħhom rigward il-prezzijiet tas-servizzi tagħhom, f'konformità mal-ħtiġijiet tad-Direttiva dwar Prattiċi Kummerċjali Żleali 2005/29/KE ([1]), ma hemm l-ebda bażi ulterjuri skont il-leġiżlazzjoni ta' protezzjoni tal-konsumatur tal-UE biex isir intervent kontra l-politiki tal-ipprezzar tagħhom.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 2005/29/KE dwar prattiċi kummerċjali żleali,ĠU L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004645/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Offers that may lead to unfair commercial practices

Many offers, such as the booking of holidays and cruises, are made available to retailers for families of four, and not for smaller or larger family units. This puts certain family units at a disadvantage and negatively affects their consumer rights.

Is the Commission considering the possibility of describing this disparity between family units as an unfair commercial practice?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

There are no EU rules prohibiting the practice of holiday companies to make available specific offers for families of four. Companies are in general free to determine the price of their services.

As long as providers of accommodation and tour operators provide clear information to their customers regarding the prices of their services, in compliance with the requirements of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]), there is no further basis under the EU consumer protection legislation to intervene against their pricing policies.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices,OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004646/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Kwistjonijiet relatati mal-protezzjoni tad-data

Il-Gvern Malti ppubblika reċentament l-Avviż Legali Nru 76 tal-2014 intitolat "Regolamenti tal-2014 għat-Trasferiment ta' Data ta' Persunili jattendu Istituzzjonijiet Edukattivi". Dan l-avviż legali l-ġdid jippermetti lill-Ministru għall-Edukazzzjoni jitlob data sensittiva dwar it-tfal kollha fis-sistema tal-edukazzjoni.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tispeċifika jekk dan l-avviż legali jiksirx ir-regoli stabbiliti fid-Direttiva 95/46/KE dwar il-protezzjoni tal-individwi fir-rigward tal-ipproċessar tad-data personali u dwar il-moviment liberu ta' tali data, u r-regoli l-ġodda li se jiġu introdotti fir-Regolament Ġenerali dwar il-Protezzjoni tad-Data?

L-Artikolu 28 tad-Direttiva 95/46/KE jiddikjara li kull Stat Membru jrid iwaqqaf awtorità superviżorja, entità indipendenti li timmonitorja l-livell ta' protezzjoni tad-data f'dak l-Istat Membru, tagħti pariri lill-gvern dwar il-miżuri u r-regolamenti amministrattivi, u tibda proċedimenti legali f'każijiet fejn jinkisru r-regolamenti ta' protezzjoni tad-data. F'Malta, il-pożizzjoni ta' Kummissarju għall-Protezzjoni tad-Data, li hija prevista fl-Artikolu 28 tad-direttiva msemmija hawn fuq, ilha vakanti għal dawn l-aħħar ftit xhur u s'issa l-gvern għadu ma ħatar lil ħadd.

Il-Kummissjoni tqis in-nonħatra jew in-nuqqas ta' ħatra tal-Kummissarju għall-Protezzjoni tad-Data għal perjodu limitat ta' żmien bħala ksur tad-Direttiva 95/46/KE?

Fid-dawl tal-pubblikazzjoni tal-Avviż Legali Nru 76 tal-2014, il-Kummissjoni tqis li n-nuqqas ta' ħatra jew in-nonħatra tal-Kummissarju għall-Protezzjoni tad-Data jistgħu jippreġudikaw id-drittijiet ta' rimedju taċ-ċittadini individwali li jkollhom id-data sensittiva tagħhom trażmessa skont ir-regoli ta' dan l-istrument leġiżlattiv il-ġdid?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(17 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Id-Direttiva 95/46/KE ([1]) ġiet trasposta minn Malta fil-leġiżlazzjoni tagħha. Is-superviżjoni u l-infurzar ta' dawn ir-regoli nazzjonali li jimplimentaw id-Direttiva 95/46/KE jaqgħu fi ħdan il-kompetenza tal-awtoritajiet nazzjonali, b'mod partikolari l-awtorità superviżorja tal-protezzjoni tad-dejta u l-qrati. Is-superviżjoni tagħhom tinkludi l-kwistjoni ta' konformità tal-Avviż Legali 76 tal-2014 ma' rekwiżiti tal-protezzjoni tad-dejta tal-UE. Dan huwa mingħajr preġudizzju għall-kompetenzi tal-Kummissjoni bħala gwardjana tat-Trattat.

L-Artikolu 28 tad-Direttiva 95/46/KE jipprovdi għal garanzija istituzzjonali ta' awtorità superviżorja tal-protezzjoni tad-dejta indipendenti. F'dak ir-rigward, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea tinnota li l-Kummissarju tal-Protezzjoni tad-Dejta Malti l-ġdid ġie maħtur b'effett mill-25 ta' Marzu 2014. Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea tagħmel monitoraġġ bir-reqqa tal-implimentazzjoni tad-deċiżjonijiet tal-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-Unjoni Ewropea dwar l-indipendenza ta' awtoritajiet tal-protezzjoni tad-dejta nazzjonali ([2]).

Il-Kummissjoni mhijiex fil-pożizzjoni li tevalwa l-konformità tal-Avviż Legali Malti 76 tal-2014 mar-Regolament dwar il-Protezzjoni ta' Dejta Ġenerali propost ([3]) peress li l-proposta għadha taħt diskussjoni mill-koleġiżlaturi tal-Unjoni.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 95/46/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-24 ta' Ottubru 1995 dwar il-protezzjoni ta' individwi fir-rigward tal-ipproċessar ta' data personali u dwar il-moviment liberu ta' dik id-data, Il-Ġurnal Uffiċjali tal-UE L 281 , 23/11/1995, p. 31.
([2]) Ara b'mod partikolari l-kawżi ta' C-518-07 COM vs il-Ġermanja, C-288-12 COM vs l-Ungerija.
([3]) COM(2012) 11 finali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004646/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Matters related to data protection

The Maltese Government recently issued Legal Notice 76 of 2014 entitled 'Data concerning Persons in Educational Institutions Regulations 2014'. This new legal notice enables the Minister for Education to demand sensitive data about all children in the education system.

Can the Commission specify whether this new legal notice is in violation of the rules established in Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and the new rules which will be introduced under the new General Data Protection Regulation?

Article 28 of Directive 95/46/EC states that each Member State must set up a supervisory authority, an independent body that will monitor the data protection level in that Member State, give advice to the government about administrative measures and regulations, and initiate legal proceedings in cases where data protection regulations have been violated. In Malta, the post of Data Protection Commissioner, which is required by Article 28 of the aforementioned directive, has been vacant for the past few months and the government has thus far failed to appoint anyone.

Does the Commission consider the non-appointment or the lack of appointment of a Data Protection Commissioner for a limited period of time to be in breach of Directive 95/46/EC?

In light of the issuance of Legal Notice 76 of 2014, does the Commission consider that the lack of appointment or the non-appointment of the Data Protection Commissioner could prejudice the rights of redress of individual citizens who will have their sensitive data transmitted according to the rules of this new legislative instrument?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

Directive 95/46/EC ([1]) has been transposed by Malta into its national legislation. The supervision and enforcement of these national rules implementing Directive 95/46/EC fall within the competence of national authorities, in particular the data protection supervisory authority and courts. Their supervision includes the question of compliance of Legal Notice 76 of 2014 with EU data protection requirements. This is without prejudice to the competences of the Commission as guardian of the Treaty.

Article 28 of Directive 95/46/EC provides for an institutional guarantee of an independent data protection supervisory authority. In that regard, the European Commission notes that the new Maltese Data Protection Commissioner has been appointed with effect from 25th March 2014. The European Commission carefully monitors the implementation of the rulings of the European Court of Justice on the independence of national data protection authorities ([2]).

The Commission is not in the position to assess the compliance of the Maltese Legal Notice 76 of 2014 with the proposed General Data Protection Regulation ([3]) since the proposal is still under discussion by the Union's co-legislators.

([1]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.1995 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, EU Official Journal L 281 , 23.11.1995, p. 31.
([2]) See in particular the cases of C-518-07 COM vs. Germany, C-288-12 COM vs. Hungary.
([3]) COM(2012) 11 final.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004648/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Pedelecs

Ir-Regolamenti Maltin dwar Ċikletti bil-Pedali u Muturi b'Qawwa Baxxa (Leġiżlazzjoni Sussidjarja 65.26) jimponu rekwiżiti stretti kemm għal pedelecs b'qawwa baxxa kif ukoll għal dawk b'qawwa għolja.

Il-Kummissjoni għandha informazzjoni dwar jekk il-Leġiżlazzjoni Sussidjarja msemmija hawn fuq hijiex konformi mar-rekwiżiti stipulati fid-Direttiva 2006/42/KE tas-17 ta' Mejju 2006 dwar il-makkinarju u r-Regolament (UE) Nru 168/2013 tal-15 ta' Jannar 2013 dwar l-approvazzjoni u s-sorveljanza tas-suq ta' vetturi b'żewġ jew tliet roti u kwadriċikli?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(12 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni eżaminat il-leġiżlazzjoni sussidjarja Maltija 65.26 kif emendata minn għadd ta' avviżi legali, l-aħħar wieħed ippubblikat bħala L.N. 365 tal-2012. Dan jikkonċerna l-leġiżlazzjoni tat-traffiku u tas-sikurezza tat-toroq fir-rigward ta' ċikletti bil-pedali u muturi b'qawwa baxxa, li tirreferi parzjalment għall-klassifikazzjoni tal-vetturi abbażi tad-Direttiva 2002/24/KE ([1]). Ir-Regolament (UE) Nru 168/2013 ([2]) ġie adottat fl-2013, u fih klassifikazzjoni tal-vetturi riveduta. Għandha tibda tapplika mill-1 ta' Jannar 2016. Il-leġiżlazzjoni Maltija hija konformi mal-klassifikazzjoni, skont il-leġiżlazzjoni dwar l-approvazzjoni tat-tipi ta' vetturi bħalissa fis-seħħ.

Il-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tad-Direttiva dwar il-Makkinarju 2006/42/KE ([3]) u d-Direttiva 2002/24/KE jeskludu lil xulxin, u f'dan ir-rigward, il-leġiżlazzjoni Maltija hija konformi mal-leġiżlazzjoni armonizzata tal-UE.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 2002/24/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tat-18 ta' Marzu 2002 li għandha x'taqsam mal-approvazzjoni tat-tip ta' vetturi bil-mutur b'żewġ roti jew bi tlieta u li tħassar id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 92/61/KEE; ĠU L 124, 9.5.2002, p. 1.

([2]) Ir-Regolament (UE) Nru 168/2013 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-15 ta' Jannar 2013. dwar l-approvazzjoni u s-sorveljanza tas-suq ta' vetturi b'żewġ jew tliet roti u kwadriċikli.

([3]) Id-Direttiva 2006/42/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tas-17 ta' Mejju 2006 dwar il-makkinarju, u li temenda d-Direttiva 95/16/KE (riformulazzjoni) — ĠU L 157, 9.6.2006, p. 24.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004648/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Pedelecs

The Maltese Low-Powered Vehicles and Pedal Cycles Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 65.26) impose strict requirements for both low- and high-power pedelecs.

Does the Commission have information on whether the abovementioned Subsidiary Legislation complies with the requirements as laid down in Directive 2006/42/EC of 17 May 2006 on machinery and Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 of 15 January 2013 on the approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The Commission has reviewed the Maltese subsidiary legislation 65.26 as amended by several legal notices of which the last one has been published as L.N. 365 of 2012. It concerns traffic and road safety legislation of low-powered vehicles and pedal cycles, partly referring to vehicle classification based on Directive 2002/24/EC ([1]). Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 ([2]) was adopted in 2013 and contains a revised vehicle classification. It will apply as of 1 January 2016. The Maltese legislation complies with the classification according to currently applicable vehicle type approval legislation.

The scope of the Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC ([3]) and Directive 2002/24/EC are mutually exclusive and on this aspect the Maltese legislation complies with EU harmonised legislation.

([1]) Directive 2002/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18.3.2002 relating to the type-approval of two or three-wheel motor vehicles and repealing Council Directive 92/61/EEC; OJ L 124, 9.5.2002, p. 1.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 168/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15.1.2013 on the approval and market surveillance of two or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles.

([3]) Directive 2006/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17.5.2006 on machinery, and amending Directive 95/16/EC (recast) — OJ L 157, 9.6.2006 p. 24.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004649/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: L-għalliema tal-iskejjel privati

L-għalliema tal-iskejjel privati f'Malta m'humiex mobbli, peress li ma jistgħux ibiddlu l-iskola ħlief jekk ikunu lesti li jerġgħu jibdew mill-iskala l-iktar baxxa tal-pagi. B'hekk, l-impjegaturi qegħdin jabbużaw is-sitwazzjoni għad-detriment ta' dawn l-għalliema.

Il-Kummissjoni għandha informazzjoni dwar jekk l-Istati Membri l-oħra għandhomx l-istess problema u, jekk hu l-każ, dwar liema sistemi jużaw?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-impjieg minn skola privata huwa bħal kull impjieg ieħor minn entità tas-settur privat. Għaldaqstant, kemm u safejn l-impjegaturi jqisu l-esperjenza mgħoddija huma kwistjonijiet f'idejn il-partijiet għal tali kuntratti ta' impjieg, u fejn rilevanti, l-organizzazzjonijiet rappreżentanti tagħhom. B'konsegwenza ta' dan, il-Kummissjoni ma għandha l-ebda informazzjoni dwar din il-kwistjoni partikulari.

Fuq livell aktar ġenerali, in-netwerk Eurydice jipprovdi ġbir ta' dejta u studju komparattiv dwar is-salarji tal-għalliema u tas-surmastrijiet tal-iskejjel fil-pajjiżi Ewropej ([1]).

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/facts_and_figures_en.php.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004649/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(14 April 2014)

Subject: Private school teachers

Private school teachers in Malta have no mobility, since they cannot change schools unless they are prepared to start again from the lowest salary scale. As a result, employers are abusing the situation to the detriment of these teachers.

Does the Commission have information on whether other Member States have the same problem and, if this is the case, on what systems they have in place?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

Employment by a private school is like employment by any other private-sector body. The extent to which employers take previous experience into account is therefore a matter for the parties to such employment contracts and, where relevant, for their representative organisations. As a consequence, the Commission has no information on this particular issue.

On a more general level, the Eurydice network provides a data collection and comparative study on teachers' and school heads' salaries in European countries ([1]) .

([1]) http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/facts_and_figures_en.php